

BIBLE EXAMINER.

NO IMMORTALITY, NOR ENDLESS LIFE, EXCEPT THROUGH JESUS CHRIST ALONE.

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THE GENERATIONS

GATHERED AND GATHERING.

"To the Christian, indeed, all this doubt would be instantly removed, if he found that the *immortality of the soul, as a disembodied spirit*, were revealed in the Word of God. * * * In fact, however, NO SUCH DOCTRINE IS REVEALED TO US; the Christian's hope, as founded on the promises contained in the Gospel, is the resurrection of the body."—"Revelation of a Future State" by Dr. WHATELY, Archbishop of Dublin.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the small volume recently issued by the writer, under the title of "*Life and Death*," the consideration of the subject of this treatise was designedly waived. Since, however, certain passages of Holy Writ, relating to the *state of man in death*, to which attention is invited in these pages, are popularly considered to be antagonistic to the doctrines there propounded; and since, moreover, no erroneous ideas, with respect to the doctrinal teaching of the Bible, can dwell in the mind without, to some extent, injuriously modifying its apprehension of the entire scheme and details of Biblical truth; and further, since the subject is one of most anxious solicitude to the heart of man; an attempt is made, in the form of popular exposition, to show what is the scriptural testimony on this interesting topic, and which the writer believes will be found to harmonize with the exhibition of revealed truth contained in the volume above referred to.

It is commended to the candid consideration of every student of the Bible, in the hope that it may contribute, in some humble measure, to the formation of correct opinions on what is confessedly an important part of Christian Theology.

Bristol, England, March, 1850.

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTION.

The inquiry* which the reader is invited to prosecute, is one, it will be readily granted, of very considerable interest to mankind. Ours is not the investigation of some abstract question of mere partial

* Since publishing my convictions of the doctrinal teaching of the Bible with respect to human immortality, in the small volume entitled "*Life and Death*," I have read with very great satisfaction, for the first time, the admirable volume of the Rev. H. H. Dobney, on "*The Scripture Doctrine of Future Punishment. An Argument*," (second edition), and which is deserving the careful perusal of every Scripture student. In this work, Mr. Dobney does not formally commit himself to the adoption of any theory upon the subject of the present treatise: he thinks that there are considerable difficulties in the way of every theory extant. He seems, however, to concur in Archbishop Whately's opinion, that the theory which is here advocated is encumbered with the fewest difficulties. "But," he writes, "on the other hand, it also has some serious difficulties to contend with. Among which, passing by those which we may leave pneumatology to suggest, it shall suffice here to allude to the fact already referred to, that Moses, for instance, who had died and been buried as other men, appeared and conversed with Christ on the mount of transfiguration; and the fact that the Saviour promised to the dying thief to be with him *that day* in Paradise (the method of explaining which is scarcely satisfactory); and again, though we dare not lay much stress on a parable, except for the moral it establishes—Dives is represented by our Lord as in a state of consciousness while yet his brethren lived, as is Lazarus also; while they who have died in the faith generally, are said to be now inheriting the promises, &c." (p. 134.) Whether I have succeeded in showing that the difficulties suggested are in reality not to be so regarded, must be left to my readers to decide. I can only say that they do not appear to be difficulties to me.

and professional importance—the study of which, while it might contribute to our information, we can yet afford to be ignorant of without very serious disadvantage. On the contrary, it is an inquiry which embraces a period, and the most solemnly affecting period, of our individual history. To be indifferent to this inquiry is not natural to man, for that were to be indifferent to himself. The Patriarch spoke not as an individual, he uttered the anxious voice of the whole species when he asked, "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"* The awful fact of death has drawn around itself many an anxious inquirer, whose persevering solicitude was not to be suppressed by the silence it maintained, and who has continued to ask, again and again, "Where is he?" It will not be said that the question, if interesting and important, is yet a fruitless one, because the tomb has but echoed the inquiry without answering it. That were a hasty and inconsiderate judgment which should class this among the many profitless speculations which too often engross the frivolous and unpractical mind. Had we still to stand, as did the sages of unaided reason, over every fresh entombment, and repeat the interrogatory to silent death, "Where is he?" the inquiry would not even yet have lost its interest, nor would it have ceased to be urged. Call it not, therefore, an idle speculation; humanity, although unconclaved, are agreed by a separate and instinctive determination to pursue the inquiry. In the absence of an authoritative reply, mankind have furnished their own response, and have dreamed themselves into the belief that their surmises were the oracle they sought. They have penetrated beyond the tomb into the region of the departed—have unfolded the mystery of death—and have announced the marvellous but complacently received assertion that death is *not death*, but conscious life still, in another and higher form. This must be fancy, for

"Who can take
Death's portrait true? The tyrant never sat.
Our sketch, all random strokes, conjecture all;
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.
Death, and his image rising in the brain,
Bear faint resemblance; never are alike."

The poet who sang thus, belied his own and the popular orthodoxy, but he is a true witness nevertheless; for thus asks Jehovah of his servant Job—"Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" Job 38: 17. So far from glancing through death's opened gates into the impenetrable gloom within, man has not even seen the doors of death. How presumptuous then to talk about the chambers and inmates of that mansion whose dark "shadow" only we have hitherto seen!

* Job 14: 10. The phrase, "giveth up the ghost," is a very awkward one, and adapted to confuse a very simple idea. The Hebrew word signifies "to breathe out," "to expire," "to die." Wemyss translates this passage thus—

"But when man dies, he moulders into dust;
When the mortal expires—where is he?
As the billows pass away with the tides,
And the rivers, when unapplied, are dried up;
So man, composed to rest in the grave, riseth not;
Till the heavens be dissolved, they will not awake;
No—they will not rouse up from their sleep."

But the Bible has spoken of death, and volunteers its aid to man, not as a guide, to astonish his vision with its chambers of imagery, but as a teacher, to solve more truthfully than he has done the perplexing problem, "Where is he?" "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Its answer, and which the language of the patriarch fitly expresses, is emphatic and contradictory of the decisions of the adventurous reason, which, unhappily, have been adopted as the teachings of Scripture by the great bulk of the professing Church: "As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not: till the heavens be no more they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14: 10-12.

That we may arrive at a common and truthful conclusion, we must understand distinctly the subject of our inquiry. There is reason to believe that many who enter upon this controversy, have not a mutual understanding with respect to the point in debate; and that there would be more unanimity of opinion if care were taken to describe accurately the precise nature of the controversy. On this subject we are in special danger of mixing up human traditions with the verities of revelation; and it is, therefore, of the first importance that we distinguish warily the unequivocal utterances of inspired truth from the speculative deductions of purely human science. Here the caveat of Paul may be urged with special propriety—"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. 2: 8. Here philosophy has, for many ages, usurped the chair of the Great Teacher; and her voice has prevailed above the voice of Him that speaketh from heaven. Here the authority of Plato transcends the authority of Christ—and the dogmas of the Academy, the doctrines of the Bible. We must reverse the Protestant boast in describing the real authority with the Church on this portion of its faith and doctrine, and say, "not Scripture, but tradition."* I am aware that these are grave charges, and I would not be understood to insinuate that the defenders of the doctrines which I have ventured to impugn, knowingly and designedly displace the highest and only authority. I believe that they revere the supremacy of Christ in his Church quite as much as myself, and would be as ready as I am to abandon whatever shall be proved to be contrary to his doctrine. But while I am anxious not to question the sincerity of those who differ from me, I am equally anxious not to be found abetting, by a culpable withholdment of personal conviction, a system of instruction which my conscience dictates to be radically erroneous. The separate existence of the human soul—its immateriality, immortality, and conscious personality, are, I believe, the labored cogitations of human reason, unblest with, and, alas! despite of, the teachings of revelation. They are, in my humble opinion, neither more nor less than the perpetuations of Platonic theories in the Christian Church, which found their way hither in the polemic

age of ancient Christianity, and which have been borne down the turbid stream of controversial and scholastic theology to our own day. In proof of this I have only to appeal to the candor of every student of Church history, especially of that important part of Church history which embraces the history and development of the doctrines. That the doctrines concerning the human soul as popularly held, are not the doctrines of the Scriptures, will be best seen by a careful examination of those passages upon which depends this branch of religious teaching, and to which we propose to advert. Allow me, however, to impress my preliminary caution on the great importance of distinguishing between the teaching of human philosophy, and that of Divine revelation. The question, let it be particularly noted, is not "What is the human soul—is it capable of a separate existence—and what is its separate state after death?" This is a purely philosophical, not a religious inquiry, nor has it anything whatever to do with religion, unless the decisions of philosophy shall be accepted as the affirmations of revealed religion, and be acknowledged as part and parcel of it. To this question *Philosophy* has given a categorical reply; the *Bible* nowhere supposes, nor suggests such a question as this, and hence it has given no answer. Let it be especially observed. *Every dogmatic assertion touching the human soul as a separate existence—every predication of its nature, capabilities, and mode of being, is necessarily of no higher value than a human opinion.* I say necessarily, because the Bible neither directly nor indirectly, neither by affirmation nor implication, contains the remotest allusion to any of these ideas. I repeat then, the question is not, "What is the separate state of the soul after death?" but, "What is the state of man after death?" The former question, if it be a proper question at all, properly belongs to the circle of human science, and must be regarded as partaking of the dubious and unsatisfactory character which pertains to psychological investigation. The soul or spirit of man in the popular sense of a disembodied personality, is an idea nowhere recognised, and is evidently unknown to inspired theology.* The Bible nowhere regards the soul of man any more than his body as attaching to itself the human personality. When it speaks of man's destiny, and predicates anything concerning it, it has respect to the composite being—the unique creature, man. Neither the body nor the soul is separately contemplated; but the one intellectual, sensational and corporeal being called man. I have endeavored in another place† to show that whatever may be the qualities and characteristics of the constituents of man's composite nature, his personality is not involved in either of these constituents separately considered, but in their union; and that in the *dissolution* of the constituents of his being is involved the dissolution of the personality, or the man. Man is an organized being, and like all other organic natures, must owe his existence, we should presume, to his organization. We are not acquainted with any species of organized being, whose individuality survives disorganization; why, therefore, should we suppose, in the absence of any authoritative information, that the case is otherwise with man—that man retains his individuality after his disorganization? Have we not reason to repudiate an opinion which is contrary to analogy, and without the least shadow of support from Scripture? The Patriarch puts the

* This language may appear to some of my readers to need qualification; but I would have such remember, how common is the practice to appeal to the religious opinions of the learned and good men who have adorned the Church in its progressive history. Opinions concerning certain passages of Scripture which are popularly held among believers now, are the opinions which the most eminent divines have embraced for centuries gone by; therefore, some say, and most think, these opinions must be correct. What is this but appealing to *antiquity*, which is another name for *tradition*? Protestants, in their controversies with Romanists, deny the authority of tradition; but in their controversies with each other, it is often, as in the present instance, their supreme appeal.

* See Whately's testimony on first page. Also, Bp. Lowth's acknowledgment referred to under sec. 1.

† "Life and Death," Lect. 1.

question in the true theological form, and furnishes a categorical reply at direct variance with the popular creed? "*Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?*" Not where is his soul, or spirit, but where is *he—man?* To which it is replied, "*As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*" Can imagery and literal assertion more emphatically declare the complete *decease* of the being *man?* and give a more unequivocal reply to the interesting question—"Where is *he?*"—*man*, between death and resurrection? The cessation of man's conscious being is yet further implied in the succeeding question, "If a man die, *shall he live again?*" To which the Patriarch replies, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."*

SECTION II.—TERMS DENOTING THE LOCALITY OF THE DEAD.

"Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" Such is Jehovah's challenge to the patriarch Job, and which occurs among that wonderful series of questions by which the Almighty impressed His tried servant with the extreme narrowness and insignificance of human knowledge. The interrogation is equivalent to, "What knowest thou of death, or the dead?" And well had it been for mankind, and for the integrity and practical efficiency of Christianity, had they been content with the knowledge of their ignorance in this solemnly profound direction. We cannot explore the place of the dead—we know not even if there be a *place*, except in the imaginations of men, who because they know that all mankind share a *common experience* in this matter, speak of them as having gone to *one place*. It is the necessity of human thought which is compelled to localize the departed, that has originated a *place*, and a *name* for the place, of the dead. The Hebrews called it *Sheol*, the Greeks *Hades*, and the Saxons *Hell*, words most aptly chosen, since while they subserve the necessity of human thought, they express at the same time the modesty of the human mind which in its election of terms, would, in this instance, appear to approve of the wisdom of not being wise above what is written. The Greek word *Hades*, is of very common occurrence in the Greek classics, but its classical signification is no criterion of its meaning in the sacred writings. We are referred back to the Hebrew *Sheol* for the strict sense in which it is employed by the inspired writers. "The Greek term did not come to the Hebrews from any classical source, or with any classical meaning, but *through the Septuagint* as a translation of their own word; and whether correctly translating it or not is a matter of critical opinion. The word *Hades* is, therefore, in nowise binding upon us in any classical meaning which may be assigned to it. The real question, therefore is, what is the meaning which *Sheol* bears in the Old Testament, and *Hades* in the New? A careful examination of the passages in which these words occur will probably lead to the conclusion, that they afford no real

sanction to the notion of an intermediate place of the kind indicated, but are used by the inspired writers to denote *the grave*—the resting place of the bodies, both of the righteous and the wicked."* Let it be borne in mind that nothing relative to the state of of the dead can be ascertained by these words simply and separately considered. In all the three languages they have a common signification—their etymological meaning being the *unseen, hidden, or unknown* place or state. These terms, then, so far from conveying to us any information concerning the *place* or *state* of the *dead*, only express our own ignorance of these matters, and ought on this account to operate as a perpetual check upon the indiscretion of the rash speculator. Whatever sense the word *Sheol* has in the Old Testament, *Hades*, as its Greek equivalent, will have in the New. The Hebrew prophets, in their allusions to the place and state of the dead, conveyed their ideas in the imagery which was suggested by their mode of sepulture. It is not to the Hebrew writings, but to the Greek philosophy, that we trace the birth of those opinions concerning the state and place of the dead, which at the present time prevail as the orthodox creed of modern Christianity. Such opinions must necessarily be defective, and destitute of any claim on our religious belief, since they partake of the imperfection and uncertainty which characterize all human investigation. They are philosophical traditions, not scriptural informations, and as such ought to be jealously excluded from the sacred domain of inspired authority. It is evident that the Hebrew prophets were strangers to these philosophical opinions—their poetical descriptions of death and the dead show whence their imagery was derived, and suggest that they could form no other conceptions of the condition of the departed, than what the analogies of their mode of interment presented to their view. Bp. Louth, in his "Lectures on Hebrew Poetry," says, "That which struck their senses they delineated in their descriptions: we there find no exact account, *no explicit mention of immortal spirits*"—a very significant testimony! This testimony is the more important since the Bishop considered that the immortality of the soul as a disembodied existence, was a doctrine known to and acknowledged by the prophets; and he accounts for their uniform silence on this subject, "because they had no clear idea or perception by which they might explain where or in what manner it existed; and they were not possessed of that subtlety of language which enables men to speak with plausibility on subjects abstruse and remote from the apprehension of the senses, and to cover their ignorance with learned disputation. The condition, the form, the habitation of departed spirits were, therefore, concealed from the Hebrews equally with the rest of mankind. *Nor did revelation afford the smallest assistance on this subject.*"†

* Kitto's Bib. Cycl. Art. *Hades*. Professor Stuart says, "Before the New Testament was written, the translators of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, i. e., the Seventy who they are usually called, had made very frequent use of the word *Hades*, in order to translate *Sheol*. They have done this in no less than 60 instances out of the 63 in which the word *Sheol* is employed in the Hebrew original. Twice they have rendered the same Hebrew word by the Greek term for death, viz.—2 Sam. 22: 6; Prov. 23: 14; and once by the Greek term for pit, Ezek. 32: 21. The sense which these translators affixed to it is most evidently the same as the Hebrews affixed to the word *Sheol*. In the Apocrypha I find the word employed 16 times, and in all cases in a manner that corresponds entirely with the use of *Sheol*. We are prepared then to expect the like use of *Hades* in the New Testament."—"Essays on Future Punishment," p. 123-9.

† Dr. Barrow makes a similar statement: "It can hardly be made appear that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly which way they did go."—Sermon 23, vol. 2.

* Job 14: 10, 12, 14, 15. It is contended by some that this passage from the book of Job is a decided proof that Job had no knowledge of, and, therefore, no hope in a resurrection from the dead. Into this controversy it will be apparent the remarks above do not necessarily enter. I have merely cited the passage to show that in death *man*, in his compound totality, in which he is alone capable of existing, is *no more*. Whatever the Patriarch may have intended by this language, in reference to the resurrection of the dead, there can be but one opinion about his meaning with regard to the *state* of the dead,

I would beg the reader's special attention to this paragraph from the pen of the learned Bishop. He acknowledges that the writings of the prophets contain "no explicit mention of immortal spirits"—that they never alluded to *disembodied spiritual existence*, and that "revelation" did not "afford them the smallest assistance on this subject." Is his inference then a *reasonable* one, that the prophets who make no "mention of immortal spirits," *therefore* believed in immortal spirits? and that, although they make no allusion to disembodied spiritual existence, this is to be explained by their inability to express suitably their ideas? And that, notwithstanding "revelation" afforded not "the smallest assistance on this subject," the soul's disembodied existence, as the human personality, and the intermediate state as popularly understood and held, were yet doctrines of revelation? By what unknown process could the Bishop arrive at such conclusions? The sacred writers have said nothing about these doctrines, therefore, says Bp. Lowth, they believed them! I humbly suggest that this negative premiss would be more logically connected with a negative inference; that since the sacred writers have said nothing about these doctrines, the probability is that they *knew nothing* about them. Their word *Sheol* drew a veil over the departed state, and involved it in concealment and darkness. If ever they have occasion to refer to the departed, their thoughts are not directed upwards, as if they believed that the personality as a disembodied soul had ascended to God—they think of the *body* and the *tomb*, and associate the departed with that which is buried. Thus, "they shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust." Job 17: 16. "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me." Ps. 69: 15. "My life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit. Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more; and they are cut off from thy hand. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps." Ps. 88: 3-6. "Therefore, Sheol hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it." Is. 5: 14. "When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited." Ezek. 26: 20. It seems sufficiently plain that the prophets associate the personality of the departed with the *buried body*; and since the words which they utter are not always their own, but they are frequently the message bearers of Jehovah, as in the citation last given, it seems also plain that God himself points to the *grave* as the temporary abode of the human personality: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3: 19.

"That
Only which comes direct from God, His Spirit,
Is deathless. Nature gravitates without
Effort; and so all mortal natures fall
Deathwards.

The soul's inheritance,
Its birth-place, and its death-place, is of earth,
Until God maketh earth and soul anew;
The one-like Heaven, the other like Himself."

Bailey's "Festus," p. 37.

The only means we have of estimating the real opinions of the sacred writers on this subject, is the language in which they convey their thoughts. Their opinions must necessarily be of a very indefinite and general character, since the subject is involved in so

much obscurity. So much, however, is beyond dispute, that their language instead of indicating their belief in the soul's disembodied and conscious existence, suggests their utter ignorance of such ideas. They spoke as if they believed that the outward image of death and its circumstances were not the fictitious, but the *real* semblance of the state of the departed. Their descriptions of Sheol or Hades are utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that they believed the state of death to be a condition of consciousness and activity.* *All*, irrespective of character, are dismissed to Sheol; "All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Eccl. 3: 20. "All things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked." Eccl. 9: 2. Sheol is a place of *inaction* and *silence*. "Let them be silent in Sheol." Ps. 31: 17. "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in Sheol whither thou goest." Eccl. 9: 10.

Sheol is never described except in the imagery of terror, and is always regarded as a great evil. It is never spoken of as the portal of heaven—the gate of immediate bliss to the righteous.† On the contrary, it is described as an awful, unfathomable abyss, extending deep into the heart of the earth, to indicate the completeness of its dominion. "*Deeper than Sheol what canst thou know?*" Job 11: 8. It stands in contrast with heaven; and, therefore, the inhabitants of the one must be distinct and separate from the other. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold thou art there." Ps. 139: 8. "Though they dig into Sheol, thence shall my hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down." Amos 9: 2.

Now, whatever may be the opinions of uninspired Jewish writers, whether ancient or modern, they can be of no authority in determining the opinions of the Hebrew prophets, whose thoughts, inspired by the Holy Ghost, are conveyed in language sufficiently explicit to indicate their faith and doctrinal instruction on this subject. It is to introduce a novel and

*The popular theology of modern times regards Sheol or Hades as the place of departed souls. Barrow saw the impossibility of adopting this opinion in connexion with the belief in the consciousness of the human soul in its separate state. He thus writes: "If those ancients had by Sheol meant the receptacle or mansions of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as these: 'The grave cannot praise thee.' 'In death, there is no remembrance of thee,' &c., * * * *except souls after death became deprived of all life and sense.*"—Sermon 28, p. 342, vol. 2.

†If at death the righteous are transported as disembodied spirits to the joys of the upper paradise, why should death be always deprecated as a great evil, and deliverance from it, either by checking its advance, as in the case of King Hezekiah, or by miraculous restoration from its power, as in the case of Lazarus and others, be always regarded as a distinguished mercy? When Paul said that he desired "to depart and be with Christ," he did not desire to *die*—it was not a departure in this sense that he coveted; but a departure from his multiplied cares and sufferings; he desired a separation from mortality, and longed for it to be superseded by immortality, which would not be his coveted privilege until he was "with Christ" at the period of the saints' resurrection. Paul did not expect to be "with Christ" as a disembodied spirit between death and resurrection, as is abundantly shown under Sections 6 and 7. Did Paul believe that they "who die in the Lord" are "blessed" in the sense of being consciously happy in death, and not because a glorious resurrection shortly awaited them—then we are at a loss to account for his concurrence with other sacred writers in their estimation of death as a *great evil* instead of a great blessing. For example, speaking of Epaphroditus, his "brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier," he says, "He was sick nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him." Phil. 2: 27. Paul evidently thought that it was a greater act of mercy to permit Epaphroditus to live than to die. And this also accords with what he says in another place—"not that we would be unclothed," not, that is, that we would die, "but clothed upon,"—have, that is, our resurrection or "spiritual body," which will be when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality."

dangerous canon of biblical interpretation, to affirm, in reference to the present question, that the silence of the sacred writers speaks consent. I presume it will be apparent that the terms denoting the *locality* of the dead, suggests nothing in favor, but rather involve the *denial* of the doctrines of the disembodied soul, and an intermediate state of consciousness for man, between the night of his death, and the morning of resurrection; and, therefore, the logical conclusion is, so far as these terms are concerned, that the origin of such opinions is purely traditional.

SECTION III.—SCRIPTURE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE STATE OF THE DEAD.

There are terms and phrases employed by the sacred writers in their allusions to the state of the departed, which, but for the pre-occupation of our minds by ideas purely philosophical and traditional, would have conveyed the impression that the Scripture doctrine of death is the cessation of the consciousness and activity of the human being. Death is frequently spoken of under the figures of "rest," as "sleep." Thus we read, "They rest from their labor"—"He fell asleep"—"The sleep of death." But it has been said that the analogy between death and taking rest or sleep, supports the belief that there is consciousness in death, since man, in the repose of sleep, is not deprived of all consciousness, although he may be so far deprived of it with respect to the external world.* If, however, the analogy is to be pushed thus far, and viewed so specially in this aspect, we may extend it still further and view it in any other aspect of which it is capable—which I conceive to be the abuse rather than the use of a metaphor. Now, death is alleged to be a *separation* of the soul and body, and that it is the *separate soul* which is conscious and active. Where then is the analogy between the respective states of death and sleep? For surely no one but phrased poets will affirm that any separation of soul and body takes place in sleep! Most certainly the consciousness of the man in sleep is located in the animal frame.† The figure of sleep, it appears to me, is employed in the Scriptures to point out a very different, but very appropriate analogy. It is adopted, I apprehend, because it suggests that the death which mankind

die in this world is not *final*—that it will be succeeded by a resurrection, even as sleep is by a waking time. Thus there was a very evident propriety in our Lord's address to the friends of Jairus, whose daughter they were lamenting as dead, "The maid is not dead but *sleepeth*;" and again to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*, but I go that I may *awake* him out of *sleep*." They were both *dead*; for of the mourners in the first case, who did not apprehend his meaning, it is said, "They laughed him to scorn, *knowing that she was dead*." And our Lord himself said, when his disciples misunderstood the meaning of his remark, and thought that "he spake of taking of rest in sleep"—"Lazarus is *dead*." He spake of them both as *sleeping*, because it was so *near their waking time* through his miraculous agency. The misapprehension of our Lord's meaning when he used the term *sleep* to denote death, both on the part of the disciples and the mourners, indicates the popular belief of the Jews of that time on the subject of death. The term *sleep*, in their judgment, was most inappropriate to describe the state of the dead, their associations with this subject, inculcated and fostered by their sacred writings, being of a more gloomy and hopeless nature, than the term *sleep* gave birth to. It is probable, that the beautiful analogy between the awaking from sleep, and the resurrection from the dead, led to the adoption of this term, more especially to describe the death of believers in Christ. They were taught to regard death as a sleep, because their waking time by resurrection was *not far off*—their Lord would "come quickly."

There are, however, other phrases and figures which will baffle the most zealous ingenuity to make them tally with the popular notion of death. We hear sometimes of the emancipated spirit breaking away from the confinement of its gross prison-house, and winging its way in happy freedom to heaven and to God. Of course this kind of speech is used only of the deceased righteous. But how does this notion accord with the scripture phrase, "*the pains of death*?" Death is here described as a *bondage*, not a liberation; for the word "*pains*" signifies a *cord* or *band*. And it is affirmed that our Lord himself was held in this bondage for a brief period, although it was impossible, that he should be the captive of death. The whole passage shows that death is a *binding*, not a *loosing* power—"Whom God hath raised up, having *loosed* the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden to it." Acts 2: 24. He became Death's conqueror, not his captive; and hence he holds by right, and as the symbol of his victory, "the keys of *hades* and of *death*;" that, as the Resurrection and the Life, he may, at the appointed time, open the *prison doors* to them that are *bound*.

And no less difficult will be the task to prove that there are animation and consciousness in death, if we resort to other figurative expressions of Holy Writ. In one of David's psalms we have this mournful complaint—"Thou hast brought me into the *dust of death*." Ps. 22: 15. The dust of death! What is there in this phrase to suggest the idea of animation and consciousness? There is, indeed, much to suggest the original curse, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3: 19.

"The shadow of death" is another image by which the state of death is portrayed. "There is no darkness nor *shadow of death* where the workers of iniquity may *hide* themselves." Job 34: 22. Death is here imaged as a place of dark seclusion and concealment. Such a place is surely not a fit intermediate abode for the immortal spirits of the just! It may be a

* An excellent author of a work on Dreams, professes to find in their phenomena probable evidences of the doctrine of a separate state for the human spirit, as the conscious personality of man. The phenomena of dreams are profoundly mysterious, and little or not at all understood; and, surely, there is no argument to be derived thence in favor of such an opinion. The data are too impalpable for the construction of such an argument as this. All I apprehend that is logically proved or provable from the phenomena of dreams is, that the human nature is capable, in sleep, of a state of consciousness distinct from the waking consciousness. Mesmerism exhibits a new phenomenon of human consciousness. We can never allow any force to arguments derived from such an obscure source. The Bible alone can speak definitely on the doctrine of the state of the dead, and to it we supremely appeal. The imperfection of the evidence from any other source than the Scriptures, is acknowledged by the elegant writer above alluded to. "If," he writes, "we are even at all *likely* to exist after death, can it seem a matter of small interest to investigate, as far as may be, what we are to become? * * * * * But where shall any light be obtained * * * * * except purely from Scripture sources."—Sheppard on "Dreams, in their Mental and Moral Aspects," p. 76.

† It does not follow as a rational inference that man must have consciousness in the state of death, because he is capable of more species of consciousness than one in the state of life. So long as he lives, man may be conscious in whatsoever state he may happen to be, natural or artificial; but death is the temporary destruction of man, and bears no analogy to any condition of the living man.

† Addison in his paper on sleep, thus fancifully writes, "I do not suppose that the soul, in these instances, is *entirely* loose and unfettered from the body; it suffices if she is not so *immersed* in matter, nor so entangled and perplexed in her operations, as when she actuates the machine in her waking hours. The *corporeal union* is *slackened enough* to give the mind more play."—Spectator, No. 487.

suitable habitation for them who "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

The "gates of death," (Ps. 9: 13; 107: 18,) like the scripture phrase, the "pains of death," is an image which suggests the idea of a powerfully fortified city or mansion, whose massive gates close in hopeless captivity upon all who pass within them. These analogies are certainly most unhappily chosen by the sacred writers, if they are intended to denote that death procures life and liberty, and a more complete enjoyment for man in the intermediate state.

Let me request the reader's attentive consideration of the following selection of passages, which present, in very definite language, the scripture testimony on the state of the dead:—

"Man lieth down and riseth not: till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14: 12. "In death there is no remembrance of thee, in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Ps. 6: 5. "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise, and praise thee? Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Ps. 88: 10-12. "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" Ps. 89: 48. "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Ps. 90: 3.

The Psalmist, in that beautiful composition from which the preceding text is selected, contrasts the Creator with the creature man. The eternity of God is confronted with the limited duration of man's existence. Thus, "from everlasting to everlasting thou art God," is opposed to "thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, return ye children of men." Many expositors understand the word translated "destruction" as the poetical term for the word "dust," since its literal signification is "what is beaten to pieces." There is evidently a reference in this passage to the original curse—the returning to the dust. If, therefore, death be but the liberation of the living spirit, and the spirit is the *personality*, or *man*, where is the *destruction* spoken of? "Thou turnest man to destruction." And if the spirit be immortal, where is the contrast between the duration of God, and that of man?

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ps. 115: 17. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146: 4. "The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead." Prov. 21: 16. "The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." Eccl. 9: 5-10. "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day." Is. 38: 18-19. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." Dan. 12: 2. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live." Matt. 27: 52, 53. "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves." Ezek. 37: 12-14. "The hour is coming,

in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." John 5: 28.

Now, to endeavor to evade the accumulated force of this scripture array by saying, as is commonly said, that in all these citations the *body*, not the *soul*, is referred to, is to fall back upon the vain philosophy of the *unproved separate state of the soul*; and, also, to make the inspired writers assert most ridiculous truisms. We need not inspired writers to tell us that an inanimate *corpse* cannot remember, and give thanks, and praise, and hope, and know. No one could suppose that the Psalmist was alluding to a dead carcase when he said, "In that very day *his thoughts perish*." Will our antagonists explain how it can harmonize with their theory of a state of consciousness after death, that in the day of death a man's "*thoughts perish*?"

The method of getting out of the difficulty in which several texts of scripture place the advocate of the immortal and separate soul, by saying, in utter defiance of all consistent exegesis, that *this* text refers to the *body*, and *that* text refers to the *soul*, is deservedly characterized as sophistical, unsatisfactory, and suspicious. We will bring this species of lawless exposition to the test in a given case.

In the 2d chapter of Acts, 29th verse, we hear Peter thus reasoning on the day of Pentecost—"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David, *that he is both dead and buried*, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Peter's affirmation is, that David is *dead and buried*—"he," the *personality* David, "is both dead and buried." Now, what are we to understand that the Apostle affirms? It is replied, Peter here refers to the *body* of David: his affirmation is equivalent to—the *body* of David is both dead and buried. Well, be it so. David means the *body* of David. Now carry this exposition on to the 34th verse of this same chapter, where Peter says—"David is not ascended into the heavens." How are we to interpret this? You reply—if for convenience I may personify my antagonistic type of a numerous class—that Peter tells us, the *body* of "David is not ascended into the heavens." Can you seriously think that Peter "tells us" this? Surely, we need not to be told that David's inanimate body has not ascended into the heavens! "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Surely flesh without blood—a corruptible corpse—could never be supposed to find a mansion there! Besides, Peter has just previously told us that David's *body*, according to your interpretation, is "both dead and buried." Unless, therefore, David had *two* bodies, he could not be supposed to be both in his "sepulchre" and "in the heavens." This is to turn the gravely effective argument of the Apostle into a most meaningless jargon, and to put into his mouth a ridiculous absurdity. However, let this exposition stand upon its own merit, and for what it is worth. You certainly cannot agree with the Apostle's assertion that "David is not ascended into the heavens." You believe that David is in glory—David's soul, his personality—himself, has long been enjoying his heavenly bliss. But pause! You have said, in explanation of verses 29 and 34, that the *body* of David is *David*, and now you say that the *soul* of David is *David*. Were there *two* Davids then, or had the Psalmist a double personality? I anticipate your reply to this—David's *body* is only called David in a secondary and popular sense; properly speaking, the *separate soul* or *spirit* of David is the personality of David, and that *has* "ascended into the heavens." Then why, I ask, does Peter affirm that "David is not ascended into

the heavens," if the *separate* soul is properly David, and that separate soul is in the heavens? Did Peter not speak *properly*? How are we to know whether he spoke *properly* or *popularly* on this occasion?

Now, there is no difficulty in understanding the sense in which the proper name David is here employed, if men will but keep their "science, falsely so called," out of the question. The Apostle was showing his astonished audience, that the Patriarch David had prophesied of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and he quotes the last four verses of the 16th Psalm in confirmation of his statement. Anticipating the possible objection of some that David in that Psalm spake of *himself*, and *not* of the Messiah, the Apostle reminds them that the statement, "Thou wilt not leave my soul (life) in hades (grave,) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," could not refer to David, because *his life was under the power of the grave, and his body had seen corruption*. "The Patriarch David is both dead and buried, and the sepulchre is with us unto this day." Therefore, some other must have been referred to, to whom these circumstances can apply; and Peter assures them that they were fulfilled in Christ of whom David prophesied: "He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that *his* soul was not left in hades—(his life was not left under the power of death)—neither *his* flesh did see corruption." And when David added, "Thou hast made known to me the *ways of life*; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance," he prophesied of the rising from the dead, and the ascension into the heavens of Jesus Christ, that he might make plain "the ways" or path "of life," and behold "the countenance" of his Father in his peoples' behalf. For the proof that this language could not apply to David, he appealed to their common sense, and, may I not add, to the theological opinions of the time on this subject? and said, "For *David is not ascended into the heavens*; but he saith himself, the Lord said unto *my Lord*, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool."

It is, I think, apparent that Peter's argument requires us to understand, that *David himself*, the "*Patriarch David*," not simply his body, was "dead and buried," and that David in no sense had "ascended into the heavens."

Therefore, if the Patriarch David has no conscious life in the intermediate state, but is awaiting the manifestation of the life which is at present *hidden* in Christ, (Col. 3: 3-4,) the Life and the Light of men, and which shall take place at the resurrection, when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints; if this, we say, be the case of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, we may fairly presume that the case is the same with all others. Then the Scriptures teach that although in the midst of life we are in death—in the midst of death we are *not* in life.

SECTION IV.—CHRIST'S MIRACLES ON THE DEAD.

The three recorded miracles of our Lord which he wrought on the deceased daughter of Jairus, the Son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus, contain nothing in their mode of execution, and other attendant circumstances, that give the least shadow of support to the popular theory relative to the condition of the dead. The manner in which they are recorded by our Lord's historians, if it suggests anything at all, suggests rather that the modern theological anthropology was unrecognized by the Church in apostolic times, that dissolution was not then believed to be a dissolving of the composite nature of man into the

constituent elements of his being, leaving the conscious life of man entire, *resident in one* of these constituent elements—but that it was the dissolution, in the sense of the actual decease, of the *man* himself. When man dies, "in that very day," says the Psalmist, "*his thoughts perish*"—the thinking being ceases to be. There is no calling upon the departed spirit, as a conscious ethereal embodiment, to return again to the fleshly tabernacle; the lifeless form is the object of attention and address, and the terms denoting personality are applied to it. Thus in the case of the deceased daughter of Jairus, it is said that our Lord "took the damsel *by the hand*, and said unto her, *Talitha cumi*, which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise, and straightway the damsel arose."*

Standing by the bier of the widow's son, our Lord thus addressed the deceased—"Young man, I say unto thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up." Luke 7: 14-15. And similar is the style of address to the dead Lazarus—"Lazarus, come forth, and he that was dead came forth." John 11: 43-44. And in the raising of Dorcas and Eutychus, there is nothing said or done that could suggest such an idea of the state of the dead, as that which now so extensively and injuriously prevails. I am aware it may be said that this style of address to the dead in the instances just cited, is to be regarded as popular, and that a mere philosophical mode of expression would have been unnecessary and inconvenient. This reply, however, contains the implication that the popular and the philosophical in the present case are at *variance*, which must be proved. Granted that it was the popular style of address, it is very obvious that what was popular with our Lord and his contemporaries, is *not* popular with us. We detach, by almost universal consent, the idea of personality from the corporeal part of man, and speak of the soul as retaining the personality. Let the reader recal to mind the usual inscriptions upon our grave-stones in exemplification of the discrepancy between the language of modern and ancient Christianity. "Here lieth the *body* of," &c.; "here lieth the *mortal remains*," &c.† Peter did not say on the day of

* Mark v. 41-42. Luke in his account of this miracle says, "And *her spirit* came again, and she arose straightway." Ch. 8: 58. This passage will come under consideration in a subsequent section.

† The very interesting and valuable work of Dr. Maitland furnishes many examples of the Christian mode of inscribing places of sepulture, so early as the first century. The extensive catacombs of Rome were used by the Roman Christians as a place of refuge during the long season of their severe persecutions under the emperors. They also afforded a convenient burial place, and were commonly used for this purpose. "The number of graves contained in the catacombs is very great. In order to form a general estimate of them, we must remember from the year 98 A. D., to some time after the year 400, (of both which periods consular dates have been found in the cemeteries,) the whole Christian population of Rome was interred there. As this time includes nearly a century after the establishment of Christianity under Constantine, the numbers latterly must have been very considerable. A city peopled by more than a million of inhabitants, so far christianized as to give rise to a general complaint that the altars and temples of the Gods were deserted, must have required cemeteries of no ordinary dimensions." In the latter part of the 16th century, these catacombs were eagerly plundered of the tablets and blocks containing the ancient sepulchral inscriptions, and distributed in the museums of the learned. The chief collection of these exhumed relics, is in the long corridor of the Vatican Museum. The following are among these ancient inscriptions, which the reader will perceive to exhibit obvious points of contrast with modern Christian memorials of the deceased.

"THE PLACE OF PHILEMON."

"VIRGINIUS REMAINED BUT A SHORT TIME WITH US."

"VITALIO, IN THE PEACE OF CHRIST."

"VICTORINA, IN PEACE, AND IN CHRIST."

"DOZMITO ELPIDIS"—the sleeping place of Elpis.

"VICTORINA SLEEPS."

NOTICIOUS LAY HERE TO SLEEP."

Pentecost, "the *body* of David," but "David is both dead and buried." Let him reflect also upon the modern conventional phraseology with respect to the dead, and he will see that *our language*, and, as language is but the vehicle of thought, that *our thoughts* also are widely discrepant with those of the early believers. Thus we say, "My departed friend," "My departed parent," "He departed this life," by which we mean that the *soul*, which we consider to be the *friend* or *parent*, has *departed from the body*, as from its temporary and earthly home. Now, such a phraseology as this, and with such a signification, is nowhere to be found in the Bible. We read, indeed, of the mournful death of Rachel, that "As her soul (life) was in departing, (for she died,) that she called," &c. Gen. 35: 18. But Moses does not seem to have attached such an idea to his language, "as her soul was in departing," as that which it has in modern usage—he does not seem to have imagined that her soul was herself, set free from the body to enjoy a purer life; so far was he from conceiving that the personality of Rachel was *resident* in her departing soul, that he puts in a parenthesis *his* idea of what had become of her personality, "for," he says, "she died"—she, the personality Rachel—died.

But it may be objected, that whatever may be said of the discrepancy between the popular modes of thought and speech of primitive and modern believers on this subject, it is sheer absurdity to suppose that our Lord and his Apostles actually addressed unconscious matter and mere nonentities. But this alleged absurdity is an unreasonable charge; it may have the appearance of absurdity to us who are ignorant of the mysterious processes by which the effect is accomplished. We are informed that the original creation was effected by the agency of Jehovah's "word." "He *spoke* and it was done." Thus God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." So far from there being any absurdity in speaking of, or to non-existences, Paul has the following passage, "God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were." Rom. 4: 7. This passage is in point, and rebuts the allegation of absurdity. The last clause of this text is not distinct from the former, but is in apposition to it; and hence is explanatory of the state of the dead. Let it be observed that in the first clause the Apostle says, "God who quickeneth the dead." Now, to quicken, or make alive the dead, is to us a profoundly incomprehensible act; it is to call "things which be not, as though they were;" it is to command that which is not into that which is. Hence the Apostle to his remark, "God who quickeneth the dead," adds, and which was suggested by that remark, He "calleth those things which be not as though they were." And since this last clause is explanatory of the preceding, it informs us what death

is. *That which is dead* is, philosophically and on the authority of an inspired writer, *that which is not*.

It is deserving attention that in each case of the miraculously revived dead, there is all the appearance of the having come from a state of unconsciousness, a waking as from a profound sleep; thus verifying, as far as appearances enable us to judge, the truth of Solomon's statement—"The dead know not anything," (Eccl. 9: 5;) and also the Psalmist's characterization of the place of the dead, when he terms it "The land of forgetfulness." Ps. 88: 12.

SECTION V.—CHRIST'S DISCOURSES CONCERNING THE DEAD.

The discourses of our Lord concerning death and the dead exhibit the same uniform phraseology, and suggest precisely the same ideas as in the last section, on his miracles on the dead. For example, "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave—not, all the disembodied spirits in heaven)—shall hear his voice and shall come forth." John 5: 28-29. "I will raise him—not his body)—up at the last day." John 6: 40, 44, 54. Christ said to the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." John 8: 56. Not understanding in what way Abraham had seen the day of Christ, and supposing that our Lord referred to some occasion when he professed to have been with Abraham, they replied, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" John 8: 57. The form in which the Jews put their question to our Lord is not a little remarkable. Had they believed that their father Abraham, as a disembodied spirit, was in heaven, it would not have been so much a cause of surprise to them that Christ might have seen Abraham, though he was "not yet fifty years old," since he had but just declared to them, in the course of the same conversation, that he was "from above," and that he "proceeded forth and came from God." But they do not appear to have had the faintest shadow of an idea of such a doctrine as a *condition of life for the human being* between death and the resurrection; and hence they express their astonishment that a person not fifty years old should profess to have seen Abraham, who had been dead several hundred years. Whatever may have been their philosophical notions about the separate state of the human soul, they do not appear to have entertained the belief that the separate soul is the conscious personality of the human being. I cannot otherwise understand why they should measure the age of Christ with the long interval since the Patriarch's death, and in effect affirm that to have seen Abraham he need to be upwards of eighteen hundred years, instead of "not yet fifty years old." "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Let it be observed that our Lord had said to the Jews during this conversation, "I am from above." "I am not of this world." John 8: 25. "I speak that which I have seen with my Father." John 8: 38. "I proceeded forth, and came from God." John 8: 42.

In answer, therefore, to the question, "Hast thou seen Abraham?" our Lord could have replied, and which would have been consistent with these professions that he had seen Abraham in the mansions above, did Abraham, as a disembodied spirit, dwell there. But instead of this our Lord made answer, "Verily, verily I say unto you you, *before Abraham was*, I am." John 8: 58. He frames his memorable reply in allusion to the distant period before Abraham existed, and explains thus how he had seen their illustrious Patriarch, "*Before Abraham was*"—obviously

"GEMELLA SLEEPS IN PEACE."

"HERE IS GORDIANUS, DEPUTY OF GAUL."

One Placius thus memorializes his wife Albana—
"YOU, WELL DESERVING ONE, HAVING LEFT YOUR [RELATIONS,] LIE
IN PEACE—IN SLEEP—YOU WILL ARISE—A
TEMPORARY REST IS GRANTED YOU."

"LAUNUS, THE MARTYR TO CHRIST, RESTS HERE."

One is buried with the prayer that she may "live in the Lord Jesus;" of another it is said he "sleeps in Christ."

"The Church in the Catacombs; a Description of the Primitive Church of Rome, Illustrated by its Sepulchral Remains, by Charles Maitland, M.D., London: Longman & Co., 1846.

All these epitaphs speak not of a part—the body only being under the temporary power of death—but of the individual himself or herself. The grave is the temporary resting place of the human personality. Yes! only temporary, for Christ has said, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against my Church."

before Abraham lived a man on this earth—"I am"—I, the self-existent being lived; and, therefore, although as a man I am "not yet fifty years old," I have seen your father Abraham in the days of his pilgrimage. Not a word is breathed that Christ had seen him in any other way than this. Our Lord speaks of Abraham not as a person *then* in existence, but as *having been*, and at that time *no more*. "Before Abraham *was*, I am." If Abraham, according to the opinions of many, is in heaven as a disembodied soul, it is marvellous that our Lord should go back to the distant antiquity of the Patriarch's earthly existence, to prove that he had seen him, when on this supposition he must have seen him in heaven, for he said, "I came down from heaven," and he spake of himself as "the Son of man who is in heaven." John 3: 13; 1: 18.

I would ask very special attention to that part of the Evangelical history which records the interview of our Lord with the Sadducees. Luke 20. This sect was evidently one of very great consideration among the Jews, since, notwithstanding the very serious errors which they professed, they were sufficiently numerous and influential to share the dignities of office with their rival countrymen the Pharisees. With both these sects Christ was at issue; and, therefore, his opposition to the one is not to be regarded as identifying him with the other. The Sadducees were very prominently opposed by the teaching of Christ, the grand theme of whose ministry was resurrection from the dead, a doctrine which this sect especially repudiated. The success of our Lord's mission as a teacher was, therefore, so much loss of influence to them: and in this respect, so much clear gain to that of the Pharisees. Under these circumstances they adventured to publicly confront him, and imagined that they should successfully perplex him, by instancing, what they supposed, an insuperable difficulty in the way of the doctrine in question.

It is not undeserving our notice that no allusion is made by the Sadducees to a state intermediate between death and the resurrection, to which their objection would also have been applicable; but they proceed from the time of the death of the woman of seven husbands to that of the resurrection. It would seem that, if our Lord had taught the doctrine of the conscious disembodied soul existing in a state intermediate between death and the resurrection, these philosophico-religious controvertists would scarcely have travelled over *this long interval* to a future event; it would have been more to their purpose to have inquired, "What relation does this woman sustain to her seven husbands *now*?" There would have been no greater absurdity in this question than that which they proposed, since, if it be affirmed that the soul is the human personality, capable of a separate existence, then relationships of some kind might be presumed to obtain in the intermediate state as likely as in the resurrection. It would have answered their end equally well to have asked the general question, "What relation does she *now* sustain to these husbands?" as the more specific one, "Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?" This form of the question, indeed, would have been the more useful, because it would have embraced the two obnoxious articles of the Pharisaic creed, and like a two-edged sword have cut both ways at once. The Sadducees not only denied the resurrection, but the Pharisaic philosophy of the existence of separate souls. Their silence with respect to this subject of disembodied existence in an intermediate state, makes it highly probable that whatever the Pharisees

may have taught, Christ's ministry comprehended no such doctrine. Their inquiry is only in reference to the resurrection—they ask, "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she?"

And Christ's reply, although it does not formally contradict the popular doctrine of the conscious intermediate state, yet certainly seems to imply that there is no such state. "The children of this world," he says, "marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke 20: 34. Here are but two states spoken of—"the children of *this world*," and "they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that world*." Not the remotest allusion is made to any other state in which man exists. On the contrary, it is affirmed of them "which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, *neither can they die any more*." It might be plausibly replied that our Lord used this word "*die*" in allusion to the event of death, the mere experience of dying; but it seems more natural and more in harmony with the context to suppose that he meant by it the state of death, the whole period between dying to "*this world*," and arising in "*that world*" of which he had previously been speaking. And the very phrases by which the redeemed are designated, seem to exclude any intermediate state of conscious existence between death and the resurrection. They are called in reference to their two states, "the children of *this world*," and "the children of the resurrection."^{*}

But further, having exhibited to them the futility of their supposed unanswerable argument against the doctrine in question, and placed its possibility before them by the announcement that the new condition of the future life will dispense with many of the relations and circumstances of the present, he proceeds to appeal to their sacred books, and their acknowledged authority, Moses, in vindication of the doctrine of resurrection from the dead. "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him." Luke 20: 37-38. This allusion to the writings of Moses, let it be carefully observed, is for this especial purpose—to prove to the Sadducees the certainty of the resurrection. Its purpose is thus formally announced by Christ—"Now that the dead are (will be) raised." Obviously the *future*, according to a common idiom of language, is here put in the *present tense*. We inquire, how does this appeal to the words of Moses prove the disputed doctrine? Moses called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. But Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, are *dead*! Is God the God of the *dead*? Said Christ, "He is *not* a God of the *dead*, but of the *living*; for all live unto him." Does this last statement, "all live unto him," mean that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were *actually alive* as disembodied spirits? If so, how does it prove the point in debate? Christ is arguing with the object of proving the certainty of the resurrection—"Now that the dead are raised," is the position which he

^{*} I avail myself of this opportunity of recommending to the reader the following pamphlet by the Rev. Edward White, entitled, "Who will live for ever?" A reply to the Rev. J. Howard Hinton's ingenious, but, as I humbly conceive, most fallacious criticism on Luke 20: 36. The tractate by Mr. Hinton is entitled, "Who will live for ever? An examination of Luke 20: 36."

undertakes to prove. Such an interpretation of his words makes our Lord's argument *pointless*; it then contains no *proof* "that the dead are raised." But the argument is logical, and the proof triumphant. As if our Lord had said, True, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are *dead*, but their death is only *temporary*, they will *live again*; this brief cessation of their existence is nothing to Him "who calls those things which be not as though they were." All live unto God, whom He designs *shall* live, though they live not *now*. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, although dead, yet live in God's affections and purposes; and at the appointed time, when "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth"—they shall live in His actual presence. God would not be called "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," were they dead for ever, as you Sadducees believe; "for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living." Jesus Christ, as "the Resurrection and the Life" promised, and the Patriarchs are interested in that promise—"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall *not die for ever*;"* he shall die for a time, but not for ever; he shall rise again. Because, therefore, the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, will live again at the resurrection of the just, God, the "God of the living," is appropriately called by Moses their God. The proof of resurrection from the dead is complete and irresistible. The point to be proved, "Now that the dead are raised," is triumphantly reached. "Then certain of the Scribes answering said; Master, thou hast well said." Luke 20: 39.

This grand argument, however, involves much more than is at first apparent. It affirms, by implication, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are *dead*; that they are *not now* in possession of conscious life. Our Lord's argument demands this supposition; it is an essential step upon which he rises to his consummate proof of the resurrection of the dead. Where, then, is the Great Teacher's recognition of the doctrine of the disembodied spirit, and the intermediate state of consciousness of the dead? This one instruction, the more valuable on account of its argumentative form, and proceeding from him who has "the keys of hades and of death," is sufficient alone to scare away the human traditions against which we contend.

But this is not all. We have ascertained from the preceding argument, that Abraham is dead; in the plain common sense signification of *being out of existence*, as indeed said the Jews in their impertinent interrogation of our Lord—"Art thou greater than our father Abraham which is dead? And the prophets are dead; whom makest thou thyself?" I invite the reader to pay special attention to this. Christ in his reply to, and confutation of the Sadducees, taught by implication that *Abraham is dead*. Carry this instruction then to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and let our Lord be his own interpreter of that much perverted discourse. In that discourse—in the incongruous circumstances which are designedly gathered together to prevent misconception—there is sufficient evidence for the satisfaction of any candid mind, that our Lord was not revealing a *historic fact*, but delivering a parabolic instruction which could not be illustrated by a historic fact; the peculiar and complicated nature of the instruction necessary to be conveyed making that an impossibility.† The strenuous advocates of the dog-

mas of eternal torment, and the intermediate state of disembodied consciousness, must appeal to some other evidence of these unscriptural notions than to *Dives in torment*; for if Abraham is dead, that is, has *no conscious existence*, as our Lord most distinctly teaches, then Dives may be dead too, nay, *must be dead*, since there is no intermediate state of consciousness between death and the resurrection. Abraham who is one of the principal *dramatis personæ* in that parabolic discourse, has had no conscious existence since the moment of his death. If, therefore, it were not at variance with our Lord's method of teaching, to represent the *deceased Abraham* as a *living actor* in this parable, neither can it be to introduce a *deceased worldling*, and to represent him suffering torment* for the follies and wickedness of a misspent life. There was no danger, it would appear, that those whom our Lord addressed should mistake this obvious apologue for an actual fact. The doctrines of disembodied human personality and life in death, were as *novel* to them of the *first*, as they are *vital* to the orthodox of the *nineteenth* century.† If the parable be in danger of misleading

* The popular inference that the suffering of the wicked will be of *eternal* duration because Dives is represented suffering torment is most preposterous. The parable has simply the following—"And in hades he lifted up his eyes, *being in torments*." Luke 16: 23. Nothing is here said about *eternal* torments! If it be replied that his torments must be *eternal* because his *soul is immortal*, my rejoinder is that he is not represented suffering as a *disembodied soul*, but in his *mortal and perishable body*. To fit him for eternal torture, his *corruptible* body must become *incorruptible*; and his *mortal* body must become *immortal*. But it is written—"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in victory*." 1 Cor. 15: 54. His very qualification for suffering would be the *signal* of his release! His body cannot suffer *eternally*, unless it be made *incorruptible* and *immortal*. But incorruptibility and immortality are the peculiar privileges of the regenerate!

† While making this remark, I do not forget that the Pharisees professed the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. But this tenet was, I apprehend, rather an esoteric opinion of the sect, and confined more particularly to the learned. The peculiarity for which as a sect they were specially distinguished, was their maintenance, in opposition to the Sadducees, of the doctrine of resurrection of the dead. Admitting, however, that the Pharisees gave some prominence to the doctrine of the soul's immortality in their public teaching, and that such passages as Acts 23: 8-9, in which the word "spirit" occurs, is to be understood (which is very questionable) of the disembodied human spirit, this will only serve to explain the suitability of our Lord's apprehension of their theological opinions, in common with those of the Sadducees, as when he said to his disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." * * * Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the *doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees*." Matt. 16: 6-12. "If it be objected," says Mr. White, "that a more abstract and decided refutation of the Pharisaical tenet might have been anticipated from Jesus, had it been untrue, we reply, that he could not teach in the language of our metaphysics; and that the absence of the doctrine of human immortality from his discourses, viewed in connexion with the declaration above, affords all the satisfaction that can be reasonably desired.—*Life in Christ*," Discourse II. p. 123.

A writer in Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature, thus accounts for the rise and formation of opinions of the sect of the Pharisees: "There is good reason to refer the origin of the Pharisees to the time of the return from the Babylonish Captivity, a period which constitutes a marked epoch, as dividing the Hebrew of the older and purer age from the Judaism of the later and more corrupt times." * * * In Persia, the scattered Jews were subjected to *new and impure currents of opinion*, which would do something to overflow and overlay the primitive doctrines and usages. Here, then, was at once a soil for sectism. Puritans would spring up, wishing to preserve or restore the original form of doctrine and worship. They naturally called forth defenders of things as they were. But in the disputes which would hence arise, *appeal must be made to reason*; for the voice of prophecy was extinct, the divine oracles were silent; there remained only the Scriptures and the interpretation of them by means of tradition—a questioned instrument—and reason to which all were, in the nature of the case, compelled to appeal. But when there is a *general appeal to reason in religious questions*, then philosophy is born in the Church, and may be expected to take the several directions into which the diversities of formation and complexion urge the mind of man to run. Accordingly, it is

* John 11: 26. In the Greek it is not as in our English version, "shall never die," but "shall not die for ever"—*ou mer apothanais eis ton aiona*.

† See "Life and Death," Lect. III.

now, it is because we have as "doctrines the commandments of men." It is not that the teaching is ambiguous, but the mind receiving it is pre-occupied with a distracting and vain philosophy.

The conversation between Christ and the malefactor on the cross, is an historic incident commonly referred to in defence of the popular belief concerning the disembodied intermediate state, because our Lord promised the penitent suppliant that he should *be that day with him in Paradise*. A promise like this, the meaning of which is unquestionably somewhat ambiguous on account of our ignorance of the precise idea to be attached to the word *paradise*, ought never to be advanced in objection against other plain and unmistakable passages of Holy Writ; but, on the contrary, ought to receive its elucidation from the clearer light reflected by them. And, I think, I ought not to be chargeable with uncharitableness, when I state that the usual prominence given to these dubious portions of the sacred writings in defence of popularly received doctrines looks, to say the least, very suspicious, when the fair rendering of other and more explicit portions strongly disprove the hacknied interpretation of the popular creed. The word *paradise*, adopted by the Hebrews and Greeks, from the languages of Eastern Asia, simply signifies, if we are to allow its Armenian origin, a place for the cultivation of useful grains and edible herbs. It is of common occurrence in the Armenian language, and is used to denote a garden attached to a dwelling supplied with herbs and flowers for use and ornament.* The word *paradise* obtained a metaphoric signification, and was commonly used to denote any place or condition of exquisite delight and happiness. Hence, naturally it would come to denote the highest condition of happiness, the future state of the righteous. It thrice occurs in the New Testament writings, inclusive of the passage now under consideration. 2 Cor. 2: 4; Rev. 2: 7. But, because it is unquestionably employed in reference to the future state of the righteous, it would be an illogical conclusion to affirm that *that* is its *universal and exclusive employment*. This word occurs frequently in the Apocryphal writings, and in Josephus, signifying a *garden*; and sometimes as a metaphor, expressive of a subjective state of peculiar satisfaction and enjoyment. In its modern usage, also, it is constantly applied to any spot eminent for the picturesque, or to whatever contributes to excite emotions of a refined and pleasurable nature. Its employment, therefore, in one place, is no rule for its interpretation in another. Because it may signify the abode or the state of the blessed, it does not follow that it must *always have this meaning and no other*. The question is, what is its meaning in the passage before us? Does it *here* mean the mansions of the blessed *above*, or the abodes of the blessed *beneath*? Are we to understand by it, in *this place*, the heaven of conscious delight—the future apportionment of the righteous; or the grave of unconsciousness and silence, their intermediate dwelling place—the *hades* of the *blessed dead*? Would its application in this latter sense be inappropriate and

absurd! We think not; for it is written of the "dead in Christ" that their state is *blessed—paradisical*. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14: 13. When our Lord, therefore, replied to the dying malefactor, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise," I conclude that he did not mean to assure him that *that day* he would go to the place of conscious blessedness, but he should "go to his own place"—that place which Christ presides over as "head over all things to his Church," and holder of "the keys of *hades* and of death;"—wherein, as it were, in one vast dormitory, repose the "dead in Christ," of whom it is promised they "shall rise first;" and concerning whom it is proclaimed, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Rev. 20: 6. Surely that is a paradise! These "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," may, during this brief interval, be stripped of their rich foliage, and appear as if sealed in the barrenness of an endless death; but they await "the rising of the sun of righteousness" with "healing in his wings," to develop and mature their hidden life—they await the Lord's coming to transport them to a fitter, a heavenly soil. It is the *winter season* of paradise—the summer is to come; but whether winter or summer, it is nevertheless Paradise—"This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

But let us examine this promise more minutely. "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." The favored man, then, was to be *that day with Christ*. Now, where was Christ *that day*?—because, *wherever* Christ was *that day*, *that was paradise*. Paul reminds the Corinthians as follows—"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was *buried*, and that he rose again the third day." 1 Cor. 15: 3-4. Here the Apostle says that *Christ, not the body of Christ, died and was buried*; and that "*he*"—not the unconscious body, for that is not "*he*"—the *personality* Jesus—that "*he* rose again the third day" from the dead. *Until the third day*, therefore, according to Paul, Jesus was among the *buried dead*. The paradise, therefore, of which our Lord spoke, and in which he and the malefactor were to be *that day*, was not, it appears, inappropriately denominated *paradise*, although it was the condition of the *unconscious dead*.

Our Lord, also, had previously informed the sign-seeking Jews, that he would give them no other sign than that of the prophet Jonas; but that "as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the *Son of man* be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The language of Christ here is very explicit: he declared that for *three days and three nights*, he, the Son of man—not his material body, but *he*, the compound being—the Son of man, would be during that time "in the heart of the earth"—the grave. Therefore, since our Lord was *that day* in the earth or grave, and the malefactor was to be *with him*, he must have been in the grave also. But he was to be *that day with our Lord in paradise*. The state, therefore, of the *buried dead* who "*die in the Lord*," is by our Lord here denominated *paradise*.

That the paradise in which our Lord had been during these three days was the state of the buried and unconscious dead, which he has converted for his people into a paradise, and that he had not during this interval passed into the heavenly mansions and the presence of his Father, is further evident

the name *philosophy* which Josephus gives to the three leading sects—the Jews had three sects of philosophy.—*Antiq.* 18: 1-2; *De Bell. Jud.* 2: 12. This philosophical tendency would, in process of time, be strengthened by the influence of the Western world, whose philosophy was cultivated and spread in the East, and particularly in Alexandria.—*Art. Pharisees*.

The foregoing account of the sect of the Pharisees, taken in connexion with our Lord's condemnation of their doctrinal teaching, will demonstrate the worthlessness of any appeal to their religious opinions in support of the popular creed in our own day.

* "Kitto's Cyclop. of Bib. Lit.," art. Paradise.

from his discourse with Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre. This devoted woman, in the ecstasy of discovering her Lord by his familiar tone of address, when he called her by name, as he was wont, fell down in pious homage to embrace the feet which she had washed with her tears and wiped with the hair of her head. The risen Lord declined, at that time, the expressions of her tenderness and reverence; and, since duty pointed another way, he bade her, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father."* He, the "Son of man," had not yet ascended to his Father—he had not ascended to the paradise above. Thus we have two distinct affirmations by our Lord himself; first, that *that day* he would be "in the heart of the earth," or buried; and secondly, that *after three days* he had "not yet ascended" to his Father. The paradise, therefore, which our Lord promised the dying man *that day*, was not the paradise into which Paul, in vision, was "caught up," but the paradise of the *blessed dead*.

This interesting incident is capable of yet further elucidation, and which will confirm the foregoing observations. The promise, "this day thou shalt be with me in paradise," is the gracious answer returned by our Lord to the malefactor's request—"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." We should, of course, expect that there would be some *congruity* between the request and the ready response which it met with. Now the request is, that Christ should remember this man on that great future occasion—"the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3: 21. It is not, "Lord, remember me when thou *goest*," but "when thou *comest* into thy kingdom." This man looked forward to the *second advent* of Christ, when he should come to sit upon the throne of David, to order and establish it, and when should take place the "first resurrection" of the saints. He begs, therefore, that the Lord will *remember him then*, and permit him to share in the honors of "the manifestation of the sons of God." Rom. 8: 19. It is to *this petition* that our Lord returns the gracious answer, "This day thou shalt be *with me* in paradise." As if Christ had said, "I will remember you when I come in my kingdom, for *this day* you shall be among those of whom it is written, 'blessed are the dead which die in (or with) the Lord'—concerning whom it is recorded, 'they sleep in Jesus,' (1 Thess. 4: 14,) by one of whom it is affirmed, that 'to depart and to be *with Christ* is far better,' (Phil. 1: 23,) and who are described as being 'buried with him in baptism,' and 'dead with Christ.'" Col. 2: 12-20. "We are buried with him, says Paul, by baptism into death * * * for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." Rom. 6: 4, 5, 8. Thus, to be with Christ, as was promised to this dying malefactor, is to be "dead with Christ," and to be "buried with him;" because they who are "dead with him" and "buried with him," shall also "live with him" and "reign with him."† And this

surely is Paradise! The promise to the converted malefactor, so far from supporting the popular dogma of the intermediate state of disembodied consciousness of the dead, takes its rank in the file of general Scripture testimony, in opposition to a notion so absurd and mischievous.

To what has already been advanced, I will select, under this section, but one more testimony in confirmation of the popular theory concerning the separate and conscious state of the soul in death. When Christ appeared in the vision to John, in Patmos, he thus addressed him, "I am he that *liveth* and was *dead*, and behold I am *alive* for evermore." Rev. 1: 18. In this declaration we have the contrast of two states—*life* and *death* in the experience of our Lord. "I am he that *liveth*," is opposed to I am he that "*was dead*." The opposite, then, of *life*, or a state of consciousness, is *death*, or a state of unconsciousness. If death means, as is popularly believed, the disintegration of certain distinct and separate parts of man, and that the conscious being—the thinking, knowing part—survives this disintegration intact—then, where, I ask, is the contrast to the being *alive*, of which our Lord in this text speaks? It is obvious that there is no contrast whatever, and it might, with as much reason, have been written, "I am he that *liveth*, and *has never died*;" for if the *spirit*, which is said to be the human personality, survives death and lives on, then man never dies—with reference to him, there is no such thing as death. But, said our Lord, "I am he that *liveth* and *was dead*, and behold I am *alive* for evermore," language which certainly affirms that Christ, as "the Son of Man," had once ceased to exist.

The Scriptures teach nothing, philosophically, about the composition of the human nature, and it is certainly very great presumption to profess a perfect knowledge of that, which in its nature is beyond the circle of human science, and concerning which revelation has communicated absolutely nothing. So far from furnishing man with any means for the analysis of his own nature, and the state into which he passes in death, Jehovah appeals to our necessary ignorance of these matters. "Thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit." Ecc. 11: 5. "Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" Job 38: 17. Modern theology professes to know both "the way of the spirit," and to have penetrated into the region of "the shadow of death." It has affirmed of the spirit, that it is a distinct principle, independent of the corporeal part of man, possessed of consciousness and immortality; and with no less confidence it has pronounced *how much* of man is the prey of death, and *how much* is beyond the power of death! And these *ex cathedra* dogmas it has enrolled among the credenda of orthodox doctrines, and after a venerable example, has added the terrible imprecation, *Si quis non dixerit, anathema sit*.

Were this all that this adding to God's Word had done, it were comparatively trifling; but the revealed

* John 20: 17. *Oupo anabebeeka* literally, as the past tense, "I have not yet ascended." *Baine*, in the same tense, compounded with *meta*, occurs in John 5: 24, *metabebeeken*, English version, "is passed," literally, "has passed."

† It is not uncommonly objected, that to lie in the grave from the time of death to the resurrection, is a cold and repulsive view of the state of the dead. Death, itself, is ever repulsive, under whatever form it may be presented. Witness Christ groaning in spirit, and being "troubled," as he followed the weeping sisters of Lazarus to the grave of their brother; and which was

repeated when he reached the sepulchre of the dead. Witness that wonderful scene of sorrow, in Gethsemane, when the loving Redeemer, who came to drink the cup of woe for man, exclaimed, in the agony of its anticipation, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" The Apostle Paul refers to the Saviour's shrinking from death, when he says, "Who—[namely, Christ,]—in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death." Heb. 5: 7. It may be thought a comfortless doctrine which we proclaim, but we cannot convert into a blessing what God has denominated a *curse*. It is this that makes redemption, by means of resurrection, so great a boon, because sin and its fruit, death, are such dreadful evils. The wise will ask for truth, be it ever so unpalatable.

Word is perfect in all its parts—"the law of the Lord is perfect," and to add to it, is to disturb its harmonies, and render nugatory and inefficient much that the edification and health of the Church demand. By casting into this perfect work of the Divine Spirit a foreign element, mankind have destroyed its admirable balance—distracted, confused, and in some important respects, obliterated the truth as it is in Jesus. Much wiser and happier had man been, if, in reference to this subject, he had been content with his necessary ignorance, and been humble enough to confess, "such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it;"—and had assumed the devout, rather than the presumptuous attitude upon the extreme circumference of human knowledge, exclaiming, with the Psalmist, "I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

SECTION VI.—THE APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE DEAD.

Hitherto we have seen that the testimony of Scripture is univocal on the subject of human mortality. We find nowhere inculcated in the Bible such doctrines as that the disembodied soul is the human personality, and a state of consciousness intermediate between death and the resurrection. The discourses of our Lord, so far from maintaining these mischievous theories, contain the most complete refutation of them. Enough has already been adduced to convince any candid inquirer of the error of the popular teaching on these topics. Since, however, certain passages in the epistolary writings of the New Testament are alleged in vindication of these opinions, I shall proceed to show what is the *Apostolic testimony* concerning them.

There are passages in the Apostolic writings which, although they might be made to comport with the popular theories, are yet more natural and significant on the supposition that the Apostles believed in a total cessation of consciousness immediately upon death. Such are the following—"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord * * * that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Phil. 3: 8, 10-11, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God (by resurrection.) For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8: 18-23.

In the foregoing citations, the resurrection from the dead is obviously the great theme. "The manifestation of the sons of God," by deliverance "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," is alluded to as the grand consummation in the history of the Church of Christ. Paul expresses his hope in language which I hesitate not to say is inconsistent with the idea that the *mere body* is the subject of resurrection. The future life, he evidently considered, remained veiled until the

graves should be opened, and the dead should come forth from them. No resurrection, no future life was clearly Paul's doctrine, as we shall have occasion presently to acknowledge, if it be not sufficiently implied in the strongly impassioned exclamation, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!" In common with other believers, he says, we "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." His language is that of the intensest ardor and aspiration, the object of which is "resurrection"—"redemption of the body." Not a syllable is uttered about attaining to *disembodied felicity*; his fervor is not kindled by any expectation that death would introduce him a bodiless *spirit* to the presence he loved! Why this silence about the soul?—this total disregard of its immediate blessedness subsequent to forsaking its gross and corruptible companion? Is it then more *apostolic* to "groan" for the "redemption of the body" than to rejoice in the emancipation and beatitude of the soul? There is no avoiding the acknowledgment, that Paul and the faithful who had "the first fruits of the spirit," are, in this passage, engrossed with the one exclusive theme—resurrection from the dead. This is inexplicable according to the theory of the orthodox faith; but it accords naturally with the doctrinal instructions of the Apostle; for "if there be no resurrection of the dead," he says, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." 1 Cor. 15: 13-14. Compare this unmistakable enthusiasm of Paul with the fervid aspirations of modern piety:

"There is a house not made with hands,
Eternal and on high;
And here my spirit, waiting stands,
Till God shall bid it fly.

* * * * *
Prepare me, Lord, for thy right hand,
Then come the joyful day;
Come death and some celestial band
To bear my soul away.

* * * * *
Haste, my beloved, fetch my soul
Up to thy blessed abode;
Fly, for my spirit longs to see
My Saviour and my God.

* * * * *
There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast!"

This pious breathing, notwithstanding its poetic charms and endeared associations, is most strikingly discrepant with the aspirations of Apostles and contemporary believers. How shall we explain the phenomenon that the first Christians, headed by their inspired teachers, were engrossed with the thought of a redeemed body and a future resurrection, as the *first and immediate object* of their personal hope; while Christians in our day are yearning for disembodied bliss, uttering in their accredited psalmody—

"Death like a narrow sea divides
This heavenly land from ours;"

and, forgetful of the body and the future resurrection, would fain

"Sit and sing themselves away
To everlasting bliss!"

It is quite true, that "redemption of the body" and "resurrection of the dead," hold a place in the modern Christian creed; but they evidently hold not the place which they occupied in the creed of the first believers. Let the reader peruse the sacred writings with an eye to the position which the Christian doctrine of resurrection occupies in the teaching and estimation of the primitive Church, and then appeal

to his own experience of the position which it occupies in the Evangelical pulpits of his own day, and he will be constrained to acknowledge that what was urged forward in former times—the best and purest times—into the very van of Christian doctrine is now scarcely to be found even in the rear. Resurrection from the dead in the Apostle's days, was taught for the comfort and hope of the Church: the same doctrine, whenever it is brought forward now, is rather alluded to as a *subordinate* fact in the history of redemption; seldom, if ever referred to as the converging point of the most cherished desires and hopes of the believer in Christ.

To these observations I know it may be replied, that whatever specialty may distinguish the doctrine of the redemption of the body at resurrection in the citations above, there are, notwithstanding, in the same Apostle's writings, particular and evident allusions to a participation in the blessedness of heaven immediately consequent upon death; and, therefore, the soul must be capable of existing in a disembodied state, and retain in itself the conscious personality of the human being. The passages alluded to are the following—

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain * * * I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better.” Phil. 1: 21-23.

It is always assumed that the first part of this citation is to be understood as if it were written “for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain *to me*,” and such may possibly be its meaning. But it stands in close connection with the foregoing magnanimous resolution of the Apostle—“In nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death, for to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.” The resolution of Paul is, that Christ shall be magnified by him either way, whether he live or die; if he *live*, it shall be *for Christ*, and if he *die*, it shall be *for Christ*, and thus Christ shall be gainer by his life or death. The meaning, therefore, may be thus expressed, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain”—that is, to Christ. But allowing that the generally received exposition is correct, that the gain is *not Christ's*, but the Apostle's, I would ask if this general expression, “to die is gain,” must necessarily mean, that at death the Apostle would enter, as a disembodied soul, into a state of conscious bliss? Were we ignorant of such a doctrine as this, of the separate state of the soul as the conscious personality, should we be likely to learn it, for the first time, from the texts before us? Surely not! With this belief in the mind, it is not unnatural to attach to these texts such a signification as is popularly claimed for them; but without such previous belief, he would be considered a most extravagant teacher, and they most credulous disciples, who should appeal to these passages in vindication of such doctrines. If the reader will recall to memory Paul's astonishing description of his apostolic life and labors, he will find no difficulty in apprehending his meaning when he says, “to die is gain,” and adds, “for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better.”

It is objected that the Apostle could not call a state of unconsciousness “gain”—that he could not “desire to depart” in this sense, and consider a state of dormancy “far better.” Surely life on earth, a life, too, like the Apostle's, full of efficient labors, must, to a mind like his, have been preferable to such a death.

Paul was not insensible to the honors of his apostolic life, nor indifferent to the glory of his Lord; but Paul was a *man*, and, like other men, possessed of human instincts and sensibilities, which permitted no stoicism in the painful experience of thorns in the flesh, and “messengers of Satan sent to buffet him.” He loved his work; but *his* work was associated with great affliction, and he could say, from experience, “No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous.” It was because he loved his work, but suffered greatly in the prosecution of it, that he said, “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain * * * for I am in a strait betwixt two.” He sighed to enter into *rest*, but he loved to serve his Lord and the Church; and his wonderful devotion to his Master's service induced him to decide, if it pleased his Lord, “to abide in the flesh.” “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”

Let those who would chide the Apostle, if they thought that the above was the correct exposition of his meaning—that is, that he desired to enter upon the state of unconscious repose—put themselves in his position, and with all their moral magnanimity, for which we give them the fullest credit, we question much, if *they* would even be “in a strait betwixt two”—if *they* would not think that, whatever might be “more needful” for others, it would be “more needful” and profitable, too, for *them* “to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” Surely that is not an unnatural, nor an unfaithful desire for him to express, who could say, “in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily—the care of all the churches.” 2 Cor. 11: 23-28.

For an explanation of the phrase, to “depart and be with Christ,” I refer to the remarks already made under the foregoing section. Surely no one will contend that the only way in which Paul could be “with Christ,” is as a disembodied soul, in the conscious enjoyment of his presence! We have already seen that it is possible to be “dead with Christ,” and to be “buried with Christ,” and evidently, *in this*, and no other way, at death, did Paul expect to be “with Christ.” He who never once taught others that they shall live with Christ, until “Christ, who is our life, shall appear,” at his second advent, could not claim this privilege for himself. The intelligent and candid reader will, I think, justify my conclusion that the texts before us cannot fairly be pressed into the defence of the popular opinions; and that had such opinions never existed, the devout truth-seeker would never have imagined that they were inculcated here.

The following is another passage in the writings of Paul, upon which very considerable stress is laid by the advocates of the popular theory. “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are *at home in the body*, we are *absent from the Lord*. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be *absent from the body* and to be *present with the Lord*.”

2 Cor. 5: 6-8. It is readily allowed that this passage *seems* to teach the doctrine of the soul's separate state, and immediate felicity in that state. But this *apparent* instruction is to be attributed to the fact that such doctrines are so generally taught and accredited. Holding the traditional belief that the soul of man is his personality, and is capable of existing, independently of the body, it is natural to put such a construction upon this text as that which commonly obtains. But I cannot think that the believers in Corinth, who had read and understood the Apostle's first epistle, could have so interpreted his meaning. Such an interpretation would have been in direct contradiction to the very clear and cogent reasoning contained in the 15th chapter of their first epistle. Let the text under consideration be taken, not as is generally the practice, *apart from*, but in *connection with*, its context. The chapter contains, in its first half, a profession of the believer's faith in his survivance of his mortality. The imagery—for the language is obviously figurative—is that of an "earthly house of this tabernacle," which is condemned to be "dissolved," and which was the Apostle's appropriate image to describe the mortality of the creature man. Man, the one compound being, is compared to an "earthly house" or "tabernacle," which will be "dissolved." Nothing is here said nor implied about an immortal and essentially *permanent* part of man, which, in its own nature, is independent of this general and complete dissolution, which is most unaccountable, as on the popular supposition this immortal part is the human personality. The believer is here taught that *he himself*, in his one totality, *not a part* of himself, must be "dissolved." But he knows that if *like* an "earthly house," he must crumble in dissolution, he will be restored again in the beauty and durability of a "building of God, a house not made with hands," and which is impressed with the mortality of its builder; but one that is "eternal in the heavens." Here the two states of the believer's existence are described by an "earthly house" or "tabernacle," which must dissolve, and "a building of God, a house eternal in the heavens." Paul is undoubtedly speaking of the *two bodies* to which he alludes in the 15th chapter of his first epistle—"there is a *natural body*, and there is a *spiritual body*," and hence he says, in the second verse, "for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven. For we that are in this tabernacle—[dwelling as mortal creatures]—do groan, being burdened, *not for that we would be unclothed*—[we desire not to die]—but clothed upon—[with our eternal house from heaven]—that *mortality may be swallowed up of life*." "Therefore, we are always confident;" for we know that if, on the one hand, as mortal beings we must dissolve in death—on the other hand, as beings upon whom God has conferred for Christ's sake and through him, the gift of immortality, we shall, when we are raised from the dead and receive our spiritual natures, live again as immortal beings "eternal in the heavens." "We are always confident" of this, and know "that whilst we are at home in the body"—whilst, that is, we are existing as earthly tabernacles, mortal and perishable, "we are absent from the Lord," with whom we cannot be until we have put off our mortality, and assume our immortality; which will be when we are raised from the dead in our "spiritual body," our "building of God," our "house" which is "eternal in the heavens." "We are confident," I say, of so glorious a re-creation in Christ Jesus awaiting us; and are, therefore, "willing rather to be absent from

the body," that is, from our "natural body"—our present mortal and corruptible nature which separates us from the Lord—and to be possessed of our "spiritual body," our incorruptible nature, in order "that we may be present with the Lord," which cannot be until the resurrection, when "mortality shall be swallowed up of life."

The Apostle desired to *be* present with the Lord, not as a disembodied soul, for he says, *not* for that we would be unclothed; and hence, in harmony with this desire, he says, "in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven;" and, therefore, since this "clothing upon" or re-creation of the human nature cannot take place until the resurrection, "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality"—his desire to "be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord" cannot be gratified, and he evidently did not expect it from his reasoning, until the dead in Christ shall rise in "the first resurrection."

So far then from inculcating the doctrine, that at death the *soul* of the believer is present with the Lord, this text forms part of an important passage in the Apostle's writings in which he exhibits an utter disregard of such a doctrine, and declares that his own *earnest longing was for the day of resurrection*; when, being "absent from the body"—having, that is, parted for ever with his mortality, he should possess his new immortal nature, in which he should behold and be for ever "present with the Lord."

I leave then the teacher of the popular doctrine to explain this remarkable fact, that here, as in the two places which we have previously considered, the Apostle says nothing of the blissful interval between death and resurrection—expresses no desire in reference to this interval; but as if impatient of it, he *groans* and *earnestly desires* to be "clothed upon" with his "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The conclusion is unavoidable, that the Apostle Paul knew no such state of intermediate blessedness for the soul; the consummation of his wishes is thus expressed—"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Phil. 3: 11.

Some, in their determination not to yield this, the citadel of their favorite dogma, endeavor to make something plausible of it by what is termed riding a metaphor to death. The figurative expressions, "clothed upon," and "at home in," and "absent from the body," it is alleged, must signify *something distinct from the clothing and the body*. That which is "clothed upon,"* and which is "at home in or

* Many expositors unduly exaggerate this and similar figurative expressions of Scripture. The imagery of *clothing* was one of the most common and familiar to the Hebrew writers. It simply signifies being influenced by, or becoming possessed of, anything without any reference to the *manner* of the influence or possession. In Peter's second Epistle, ch. 1: 13, the Apostle thus writes—"I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must *put off* this my tabernacle." On this passage the pious and learned Dr. Watts comments: "The soul or thinking principle of the Apostle Peter, which is here supposed to be himself, is so plainly distinguished from the tabernacle of the body, in which he dwelt for a season, and which he must *'put off'* shortly, that most evidently implies an existence of this thinking soul, very distinct from the body, and which will exist when the body is laid aside. Surely, the conscious being and its tabernacle or dwelling place, are two very distinct things; and the conscious being exists when he puts off his present dwelling."—"Essay towards the Proof of a Separate State." Here is an example of forcing a meaning out of the *figurative terms* by which a truth is illustrated; a method of interpretation which, if cast in a canonical form, the eminent Doctor would not for one moment have allowed. In proof of the incorrectness of the Doctor's exposition of the above passage, let the reader endeavor to interpret on his principle the following kindred texts—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 13: 14. "As many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have *put on* Christ."

absent from the body," is the *immortal soul*. Now this looks very specious; but admit it for the sake of argument, and it is obvious what a strange and unmeaning confusion of language the whole of this part of the chapter exhibits. Paul sets out with expressing the strong confidence which he and believers generally had in their triumph over mortality when they should receive their "building of God," their "spiritual body," which he had shown in his first epistle, will be bestowed at the resurrection. Groaning under the burden of a present mortality, he earnestly desires that the time may soon arrive when, possessed of his "spiritual body," "mortality shall be swallowed up of life." *Until this clothing upon—that is, until the resurrection—it is obvious that mortality reigns—it is not swallowed up of life.* But how does this instruction of Paul's agree with the popular belief that the immortal soul at death escapes from its prison house of clay, and that at this moment—

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign!"

The Apostle is evidently at variance with the modern theology on this point, when he teaches that *not until we are "created in Jesus Christ"—invested with our "spiritual body"—"clothed upon" by our "building of God," the grand result is accomplished, mortality is swallowed up of life.*

Besides, on the supposition that the being "absent from the body" and "present with the Lord," refers to the immortal soul leaving its corporeal abode and ascending to God, how, I ask, does this statement follow as an *inference* from what the Apostle had been previously discoursing upon? Why does he preface it by a term which shows that it stands connected with the foregoing observations as a consequence, and say, "*Therefore, we are always confident,*" &c.?

The substance of Paul's statement is that he earnestly desired the *arrival of resurrection*, that he might be possessed of his spiritual and immortal nature. What logical connection is there between this emphatic desire, and the statement that, when he died, his disembodied soul ascended to the presence of God? According to the exposition given above, the connection is obvious and natural; but such an exposition of the passage, the only possible one as it appears to me, gives a most decided contradiction to the doctrine which is so fondly and furtively reared upon it.

But further, if we are to understand that apparent *something* which is clothed upon to be the spiritual nature or soul, then the Apostle plainly avows that he had no desire for *this intermediate state*; for he says, "Not for that we would be *unclothed*." Even with this gloss his longing is for the "redemption of the body" at resurrection. Let it be noted, that according to this exposition, Paul does not pass over in silence the popular notion of an intermediate state of bliss, as in the true exposition of the passage as given above; he is made to affirm that he would rather not participate in it; he does not desire disembodied bliss—"Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Once more, if it be affirmed that the imagery of being "clothed upon" represents the popular notion

of the *soul as something within* which is "clothed upon" with its "earthly house" or "building of God," then consistency demands that the doctrine of the soul's incorruptibility and immortality be forthwith discarded from the orthodox belief; for it is written, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15: 53. This *something within—the soul*—must put on incorruption and immortality, and is itself called "this corruptible, and this mortal." "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

The attempt to evade the proper meaning of the Apostle's language, does but involve the disconcerted polemic in greater perplexities, and in the end lead to his being entangled and taken in his own net. Candor must compel the acknowledgement that the very prevalent custom of quoting this text of Paul's for the purpose of teaching that he expected to be with Christ immediately at death, is most unwarrantable; a very gross and mischievous perversion of his meaning.

I now proceed to show, from other parts of the epistolary writings, that the doctrines of the disembodied and intermediate states, as popularly understood and received, were evidently unknown to the Apostles. They have made statements which no ingenuity, even though stimulated by the idolatry of system, can unblushingly explain away. I select from Paul's celebrated argument with certain sceptical Corinthians who said, "there is no resurrection of the dead," and which is contained in the fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to that church.

"If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." 1 Cor. 15: 12.

Two consequences are here asserted to follow upon the denial of the resurrection of the dead. The first is, that Christ cannot have risen from the dead, and the second is, that the religion of Christ is a vain and profitless profession—"Our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain." Now, in this statement we learn what was the subject of apostolic preaching, and what was the faith of primitive saints. "Our preaching is vain," says the Apostle, "if Christ be not risen," which event has not occurred, "if there be no resurrection of the dead." Paul, therefore, preached a *risen Saviour*, and the *resurrection of the dead*. And thus his historian informs us, that on the occasion of his arraignment before the Jewish council, he exclaimed, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." Acts 23: 6. Before the Roman Felix, he thus explains himself—"After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24: 14-15. And again, "Let these same here say, if they have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood before the council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, *Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.*" Acts 24: 20-21. The governor, Festus, thus explains to King Agrippa the nature of the accusation brought against Paul—"Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed; but had certain questions

Gal. 3: 27. "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man." Col. 3: 9-10. "Put on therefore, * * * bowels of mercies, &c. Col. 3: 12. "Put on Charity." Col. 3: 14. "He put on righteousness as a breast plate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak." Isa. 49: 17.

against him, of their own superstition, and of one *Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.*" Acts 25: 18-19. In his address before Agrippa, Paul thus speaks, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers—[evidently, the hope of the promise of resurrection]—unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26: 6-8. And near the conclusion of his apology, he says, "Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead." Acts 26: 22-23. At Athens we are informed that his philosophical auditory said, "he seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them *Jesus and the resurrection.*" And they took him and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, may we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?" To which Paul replies, after certain prefatory observations, God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, we will hear thee again of this matter." Acts 17: 18-19, 31-32.

The above very forcibly explain what Paul meant, when he said, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, * * * then is our preaching vain;" because the resurrection of the dead was evidently the burden of the Apostle's ministry. On this physical fact depends that grand moral superstructure of the sanctified living temple, whose foundations are laid in this life, but whose development, as "the perfection of beauty," is contingent upon the life which is to come. And hence Paul further affirms, "*Your faith is also vain,*" * * * if there be no resurrection of the dead," for then the great object of your solicitude—the means of your triumph over "this corruptible" and "this mortal," is an unreal and impossible event. That the resurrection from the dead was the great object of solicitude to the apostolic Church, let Paul's own experience testify. "If, by any means, I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead"—and his statement, we "which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

The infidelity of those persons in the Corinthian Church, on the subject of resurrection, is shown by the Apostle to be most absurd. In taking away this doctrine, they deprived Christianity of its great turning point—they tore away from the Christian profession all hope and motive—they sealed up the vestibule of the temple of life. Allow that the resurrection will not occur, then Christianity is a meaningless profession—our "preaching" and your "faith" are both "vain."

But how could Paul declare this, if the soul of man, after death, will proceed at once, as his disembodied personality, either to happiness or to misery? Surely his "preaching" and their "faith" could not be "vain," if nothing more were accomplished but the purification and preparation of the soul for its bodiless bliss in the future life! But, both "preaching" and "faith" were "vain," if the utility of Christian doctrine, and the realization of believers' blessedness

depend upon the resurrection of the dead, which event would never occur. And that resurrection is thus vital to Christianity, the Apostle's argument proves, or it is incoherent and worthless.

"If the dead rise not * * * then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15: 16-18.

The Apostle, in this concise piece of reasoning, distinctly affirms that if there be no resurrection of the dead, then there is no future life. He shows, also, what was his doctrine of the intermediate state of believers—"they which are fallen asleep in Christ," not they which are in a state of disembodied consciousness and activity in glory. But, can the orthodox of the nineteenth century agree with Paul in this affirmation, that if the dead rise not, Christians who have departed this life are perished? No, they say, "if the dead rise not," the soul lives on—its life does not depend upon the resumption of the body. Then what does Paul mean, when he says that "they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished?" How have they perished? Will it be replied that the body is only alluded to—that "if the dead rise not," the body will perish? If so, we have two objections to offer to such an interpretation. The first is, that the Apostle says, "then they which are fallen asleep in Christ." Surely Paul could not mean, by this expression, mere dead bodies! Dead bodies are not "they which are fallen asleep in Christ." The very expression is against such an interpretation, to say nothing of the *usus loquendi* of the Scriptures, which certainly gives it no sanction.

Besides, such an exposition involves a departure from the theological sense of the word "perished." There are several important passages of Scripture in which the word "perish" occurs, and in reference to which we are told that we must understand this word in the theological sense, not in the natural and common sense, which unscholastic readers might dangerously adopt. Now, the theological sense of the word "perish" in those parts of the sacred writings to which allusion has been made, is an everlasting endurance of miserable suffering in the fires of Gehenna. Why, then, depart from this sense in the present instance? Let criticism and exegesis be consistent, and we have the following as the signification of the passage before us—"Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," that is, they have gone to Gehenna, to endure the endless torments of the unquenchable fire. This is the theological sense of *perishing*! I need not characterize such an interpretation as most awfully and insultingly absurd. What! the holy, self-denying followers of Christ, because the dead rise not, a hope which they had fondly cherished, to be consigned to endless misery! Paul never meant this. He was no professor of the cabalistic theology which disdains the vulgar expositions of plain sense. He might be unscholastic and untheologic according to modern ideas; he might not be skilled in the abnormal art of spiritualizing plain words; but he was a preacher, commissioned by Christ, and if his teaching was "not in the words, which man's wisdom teacheth," he could nevertheless say, "I speak forth the words of truth and soberness." I leave it with the teacher of the soul's separate and conscious existence, in the interval between death and resurrection, to account for the Apostle's statement, that "if the dead rise not, then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

"Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are

they then baptised for the dead?" 1 Corinth. 15: 29.

I am aware that this is a very disputed passage, and that many and conflicting expositions have been given of it. But I am of opinion that the plain common-sense reader, whose mind was devoutly intent upon the current reasoning of the Apostle in this chapter, would hardly pause to ask, what does Paul mean in this place? He would conclude that the meaning was something as follows: "Else what shall they do who have been baptised [into Christ] for [or in hope of the resurrection of] the dead?" what, I say, "shall they do if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptised for [professing their expectation of the resurrection of] the dead?" The phraseology in this place is peculiar, but it is in harmony with what the Apostle elsewhere employs, when he speaks of being baptised into Christ's death, and being buried with Christ by baptism into death. Rom. 6: 3-4.

Here, as in the foregoing extracts, the Apostle is intent upon resurrection of the dead. "What shall they do," he asks, "if the dead rise not at all?" I ask the candid reader if Paul could have asked such a question, if he believed in the modern dogma of disembodied felicity for the departed saints of Christ? Surely they could both "do" and enjoy much, if, as separate and immortal spirits, they departed at death to be with Christ.

"And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" 1 Cor. 15: 30.

This question is connected with the text last under consideration, "If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptised for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" "We" who are the objects of such cruel and unremitted persecution, "we" who are in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils everywhere—"why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" Paul seems totally indifferent to anything like disembodied bliss, he sees no reward awaiting him in the interval between death and resurrection. "Why stand we in jeopardy," he asks, "every hour, if the dead rise not at all?"

"What advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." 1 Cor. 15: 32.

Here is something like a climax. Paul in this passage unquestionably declares, that if the dead do not rise, then he expected no advantage beyond the present life; and the wisest course would be to gratify the sensual appetites, as that would be the greatest good which man can enjoy. *Then* there can be little doubt "a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry." Eccl. 8: 15. Therefore, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The path of virtue, notwithstanding its present benefits, is so difficult to persevere in, that the easiest way of enjoying life is to turn sensualist, for all will be one in the end—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Again, I inquire, could Paul write in this strain if he believed that there is a state of retribution to which the disembodied soul of man is amenable immediately after death? Who that is a believer in the opinion of the soul's separate state and conscious life after death, will adopt the language of the holy Apostle and ask, "What advantageth it me if the dead rise not?" He cannot adopt such language. If the dead rise not, it does, nevertheless, greatly advantage him as a believer in the soul's immortality. He would deem it awful profanity to say at all, much more with the earnest enthusiasm with which Paul uttered the words, "If the dead rise not, let us eat

and drink, for to-morrow we die." But surely it is not unsafe to follow an Apostle's example, or to adopt an Apostle's sentiment! Paul, in an earlier chapter of this epistle, thus addresses these Corinthians, "I beseech you be ye followers of me;" nor would he have rebuked the man who might have echoed his language. Paul, it must be admitted, taught most emphatically, that *if there be no resurrection from the dead, there is no future life.* There can be then no undying soul; and hence no intermediate state of enjoyment or suffering for man.

In his pastoral character, Paul exhibits the same disregard of the doctrine of an intermediate state of life for the separate soul, as he had done in his character of the Christian dialectician. Thus he writes to the bereaved saints at Thessalonica—

"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. 4: 13-18.

How unlike is this Apostolic mode of consoling the friends of the departed to that which obtains now! Paul calls the departed "them which are asleep"—"the dead in Christ," and he bids survivors "sorrow not even as others which have no hope" in resurrection unto life; because, since "Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him," when he comes to erect his throne and reign over the nations in righteousness; for "the dead in Christ shall rise first," and shall follow in the train of their victorious Lord. Be not, therefore, perplexed, says Paul, because I have taught you that some will be "alive and remain" upon the earth "unto the coming of the Lord," among whom will be ourselves if the Lord shall come in our life-time; be not, I say, perplexed by this statement, as if those "which are alive and remain" shall "prevent" (anticipate) the resurrection of "them which are asleep," among whom are your departed friends, whose memory you so fondly and naturally cherish. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first;" and so having raised them out of their graves he will "bring" them "with him" to meet us who may happen to be "alive and remain" at the time of that event; and we "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

"These words," by which Paul would have the Thessalonian mourners comforted, contain no comforting assurances that their deceased friends were as never dying souls

"Drinking fresh draughts of endless pleasure in;" but, that notwithstanding they were dead, this should not disconcert the survivors, as if the power of the Lord could not raise them again; "for," says the Apostle, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will

God bring with him." The resurrection of Christ is the pledge of his people's resurrection—"Because I live ye shall live also." Therefore, "comfort one another with these words," that your now deceased friends shall live again, and together with you be glorified with your Lord. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" "Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God."

Here, it will be granted, is a very suitable place for expecting some suggestions about disembodied bliss in the state between death and resurrection; but the Apostle pauses not in the *interval*—he draws thence no means of solace to the mourners, but tells them that their departed friends are indeed in the land of darkness and forgetfulness, and bids them look onward to resurrection as the period when they shall next live again. Paul tells this early Church of no meeting with their Lord until resurrection. "Then," namely, when "the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout"—"then," not before, "we shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Compare this mode of comforting mourners with the orthodox method in our day. Paul bade the sorrowing friends at Thessalonica think of opening graves at the resurrection; it is the orthodox exhortation "to think of emancipated spirits entering into the joys of the upper paradise. Paul, it appears, had no means of consoling the mourners by any assurance of immediate blessedness for the departed faithful—he could only bid them look forward to the great gathering at the resurrection unto life. Modern Christian pastors have an advantage over Paul in this respect; they can anticipate and guarantee something of this prospective blessedness—they can tell the bereaved that their friends are in "glory," and ask—

"Why do ye mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms.

Behold th' innumerable host
Of angels clothed in light!
Behold the spirits of the just
Whose faith is turned to light!"

The Thessalonians, though blessed with an Apostle for a pastor, were deprived of these sweet assurances. "Miserable comforters are ye all!" would the Church of the present day say to Paul and his brother Apostles. But no doubt Paul could justify his method, and add with his usual significance, "I think also that I have the spirit of God."

The foregoing extracts from the epistolary writings are selected from the epistles of Paul. Paul's constitute by far the greater portion of the apostolical epistles, and being written, too, under a greater variety of circumstances, our opportunities of selection, as might be expected, are more abundant from his than from the writings of the other Apostles. The testimony of one of the apostolate, however, is the testimony of all. I appeal, then, to the intelligent inquirer after truth, if it is not beyond all dispute unaccountable, if the popular opinions be correct with respect to the soul's immortality, and its capability of happiness and misery between death and resurrection, that the Apostle Paul in his discourses on death, in his *most ardent aspirations*, and also in his pastoral consolations of the bereaved, should be entirely silent about the soul's separate state of conscious enjoyment or suffering immediately after death, and be wholly intent upon "the redemption of the body" at the resurrection of the dead? Doc-

trines upon which the Apostle is altogether silent, being evidently a stranger to them, modern pastors seem thoroughly informed and most eloquent upon; and, on the other hand, what Christian preachers of the present century rarely speak of, and never hold up prominently, for the encouragement and hope of the Church, the Apostle made the grand themes of his inspired ministry! This is a phenomenon which the advocates of the popular dogmas concerning the soul have to account for.

The popular presentation of Christianity is defective and unintelligible—a system of detached and incongruous doctrines which necessarily fail to produce an enlightened and vigorous piety. The great bulk of most Evangelical congregations is composed of persons who are totally unable to explain the relations of the several articles of their inherited creed. There they exist stored up in motley group in a tenacious memory—a doctrinal mosaic—an awkward complication of the teachings of God and the traditions of men. The understanding can make nothing of them; its attempts have been so often baffled that it has foreborne to attempt. By the interpolation of these traditional dogmas, every cardinal truth of revelation has been displaced or put in a false light. The landscape of infinite love is blotted by dark and unnatural shadows; "men" appear "like trees walking;" indistinctness and disorder are everywhere introduced. Some cardinal truths, and among them the *first and chief*—Immortality the gift of God through Jesus Christ—is entirely rejected! The central sun of the doctrinal system being gone, all other truths have lost their orbit, and move in eccentric and confused course. Divines have labored again and again to reduce this wild confusion to order, but in vain. The ancient regime can alone be restored by the reinstatement of the sun of the system—Life in Christ—and the abandonment at once and forever, of the presumptuous claim to the soul's immortality.*

*Dodwell has collected a large amount of important evidence to prove that the early Christian Church did not recognize the dogma of man's natural immortality. Irenaeus, the disciple of Polycarp, the cotemporary with the Apostle John, thus writes: "Life is not from ourselves, nor from our nature, but it is given or bestowed according to the grace of God; and, therefore, he who preserves this gift of life, and returns thanks to Him who bestows it, he shall receive 'length of days for ever and ever.' But he who rejects it and proves unthankful to his Maker for creating him, and will not know him who bestows it, he deprives himself of the gift of duration to all eternity. And, therefore, the Lord speaks thus of such unthankful persons—'If you have not been faithful in that which is least, who will commit much to you?' intimating thereby unto us, that they who are unthankful to him with respect to this short transitory life, which is his gift, the effect of his bounty, shall be most justly deprived of length of days in the world to come."

Christian poetry of the fourth century exhibits the faith of the believers of that age in the doctrine that *life*, in the sense of conscious existence, is the everlasting privilege of the righteous only, and bestowed upon them by Jesus Christ. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, who lived in the fourth and fifth centuries, thus gratefully acknowledges the mercies of redemption—

"Ligno mea Vita pependit,
Ut staret mea vita Deo.
Quid, Vita rependam,
Pro vita tibi, Christe, mea?" &c.

My Life was slain that I might live,
My Life did hang upon the tree;
Teach me what recompense to give
For life bestowed, my Life, by Thee, &c.

Jacopone da Todi, a Christian poet of the fifteenth century thus wrote—

Christus mortem non meruit,
Etsi mori disposuit
Ut morte mortem tolleretur.

Ligno lignum opposuit,
Et solvit quæ non meruit
Ut debitores liberetur.

To what has already been advanced under this section, I will subjoin a few citations from the apostolic writings which demonstrate that the Apostles and early Christians, so far from expecting any intermediate state of happiness between death and resurrection, awaited the second coming of Christ and their own resurrection from the grave, as the time when they expected they should first meet and dwell with their Lord.

"In Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." 1 Cor. 16: 22-23.

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." 2 Cor. 4: 14.

"When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Colos. 3: 4.

"We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall [then] see him as he is." John 3: 2.

"When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 5: 4.

"And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." 1 John 2: 28.

The following passage from the Psalms will demonstrate that the expectation of David was identical with that of the Apostles.

"I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Psalm 17: 5.

Here David looks forward to resurrection, and says he shall not be satisfied till then. But if he believed that he went to the divine presence as a disembodied spirit instantly that he died, that then he should behold God's "face in righteousness," why does he refuse to be satisfied until he awakes at the resurrection? In the last verse of the preceding psalm, he says, "in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16: 11.

Surely, "fulness of joy" and "pleasures for evermore" would satisfy the spiritually-minded David! What more of "joy" than "fulness" could he have? And how longer their duration than "for evermore" could he expect his "pleasures" to continue? And all this in the "presence" of Jehovah. David evi-

dently did not expect to enter the Divine presence as a disembodied spirit, and hence he looked onward to the resurrection as the time when his satisfaction should be complete—"I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

It is further manifest from our Lord's farewell discourse to his disciples, that believers at death do not go to him; but that they await his coming to them at the period of the second advent.

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. * * Because I live, ye shall live also." John 14: 2, 3, 19.

The popular exposition of this passage represents our Lord's coming as synonymous, and cotemporary with the death of believers. But such an exposition, besides contradicting the manifest testimony of other passages of Scripture, represents "the coming of the Lord" to be as frequent as his people die, whereas, according to the Scriptures, his coming is to be for the "second" and last time—and for the special purpose of erecting his throne and establishing his reign in connection with his revived saints, who will then participate in that "first resurrection," which is their exclusive privilege. The meaning of this farewell assurance is explained by the 19th verse, if it be not sufficiently plain in itself, where Christ promises his disciples a restoration to life at a future period—"Because I live, ye shall live also." This promise evidently refers to that period "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."*

Thus it is beyond dispute, that our Lord and his Apostles concur in bearing the most explicit testimony to the truth of the doctrine, that man has no disembodied and conscious existence between death and resurrection; and that if there were no resurrection, there would be no future life. The popular dogma of a state of partial and preparatory retribution for the disembodied soul immediately after death, is obviously a fiction—a human tradition, receiving its amplest refutation from the Word of God. "God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." Acts 17: 31. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12: 48. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this [not happiness for the saints and misery for the wicked, but] the judgment" Heb. 9: 27.

SECTION VII.—IMPLIED AND DOUBTFUL ALLUSIONS TO THE DEAD.

The controversy concerning the doctrine of the dead is encumbered with a peculiar difficulty. Persons, by long habit, associate their preconceived ideas with the term soul, whenever and wherever it may occur; and since this word is very extensively employed by the sacred writers, it is difficult to make apparent the necessity of disburdening the

* 2 Thes. 1: 10. That the "coming of the Lord," so frequently and prominently adverted to in the Scriptures, does not refer to the period of our death, but to the second personal advent of Christ, no intelligent and candid Bible reader can entertain a doubt. For example: Paul thus writes in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians—"We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord." Ch. 4: 15. Peter's question to our Lord, respecting John, gave rise to an opinion which shows that the disciples and their cotemporaries understood our Lord's coming in no figurative, but literal sense. "Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die." The coming of the Lord, instead of suggesting to the disciples the season of death, banished that idea altogether from their minds.

In Adam vita corruit,
Quam secundus restituit,
Ut vita mortem superet.

Ulmus uvam non peperit,
Quid tamen vita deperit
Quod ulmus uvam sustinet?

Fructum tuum non genui
Et oblatum non respui,
Ut poena culpam terminet.

A te mortalem habui,
Immortalem restitui,
Ut mors in vitam germinet.

The following literal translation, by Dr. Maitland, is furnished of the above—

"Christ deserved not death, but determined to die, that by death he might remove death. He set tree against tree, and paid what he owed not to deliver the debtors. In Adam fell that life which the second Adam restored, that life might vanquish death. The elm bears no clusters; why then must life seek to hang upon the elm the bunches of the vine? Thy fruit is none of my bearing; when laid upon me, I rejected it not, that my pangs should end thy sin. For this mortal received from thee, I return thee an immortal, that death may blossom into life."—"The Church in the Catacombs," pp. 356-7.

imagination of that purely human conception of it, which at the present time so generally prevails. The demand that the mind must become, as it were, a blank sheet, that it may receive a new and truer inscription, is felt by many to be a begging the whole question—like asking a garrison to offer no resistance, while we deliberately proceed to storm the citadel. All persons do not equally perceive that until such a surrender of mental preconceptions be made, there is no probability of arriving at a just understanding with respect to the point at issue. To show, however, that this demand is not an unreasonable one, I would request the candid reader to ask himself *whence* he obtained his ideas—if they be the popular ideas—about the soul or spirit* as a separate existence—immaterial, immortal, a man's personal self? Let him search the Bible through, to ascertain the warrant for his long cherished belief, and he will be compelled to acknowledge that such a doctrine is purely traditional and educational. He will discover that the Bible nowhere speaks of "immortal souls," "never dying souls," which, and similar phrases, are so generally current in the religious phraseology of our day; but that it uniformly regards man as a rational animal, dependant upon his organization, however complex, for his conscious personality, and that the scriptural usage of the words *soul* and *spirit* is quite distinct from that which popularly obtains.

It is not a little remarkable what a general disinclination there is among the advocates of the soul's separate and conscious state, to discuss the subject on strictly scriptural grounds. As if intuitively sensible that the Bible is the *least* valuable auxiliary, they repair to the repertory of reason, the opinions of heathen sages, and the alleged unanimity of mankind. But this is a theme upon which revelation can alone positively discourse; and if it has revealed nothing concerning the soul as a disembodied personality, what confidence can be placed in mere human and fallible speculations? Appeals again and again are made to the priests of reason, and the psychological jargon of the philosophical pontiffs of antiquity are the inspirations of her oracle. And as for the unanimity of mankind, what authority is here? Granted, for the sake of argument, that mankind are unanimous in their belief of the separateness and personality of the human soul—does this unanimity prove that the opinion is true? If there be *unanimity* among mankind on this subject, which may be questioned, there certainly is not *uniformity* among them, and so far as history enables us to judge, there never has been.† Besides, traditional transmissions we hold to be of little worth, and in the present instance of no worth at all, since these opinions being nowhere authorized, nor even suggested by the inspired oracles, must owe their birth to the conceit of the human mind. And why should we have confidence in the unanimity of the decisions of the human *intellect*?—we have none in the unanimity of the dispositions of the human *heart*.‡ If, therefore, unanimity cannot prove man's

moral rectitude, why should we presume that it can demonstrate his *intellectual* rectitude? The Bible thus characterizes our fallen race—"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Here is unanimity, and what does it prove? Clearly, that neither the *head* nor the *heart* of man is of any worth for the directory of our faith and the government of our life. For our information in this matter, we hold the Bible to be the only competent and exclusive instructor. Notwithstanding the disposition to call in reason's aid in this controversy, we still press the question, "What saith the Scripture?" We observe, and with suspicion, which adds an emphasis to our question, that when thus closely pressed, the defenders of the popular theory eagerly entrench themselves behind certain obscure and disputed passages of Scripture, which we therefore proceed to consider. It may truly be said of such as adopt this questionable course, that "they love *darkness* rather than *light*"—the obscurities of such things as are "hard to be understood," in preference to what it is said "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." Instead of adopting the just method of interpreting doubtful passages by those which are definite and obvious in their meaning, they cling, with pitiable tenacity, to any shadow of support which such dubious portions may seem to afford.

I think I am fairly permitted to affirm, that what has already been advanced under the preceding sections, is sufficiently definite and unmistakable to justify the conclusion, that both our Lord and his Apostles taught no such doctrines as that the disembodied soul is the human personality, and that the soul or spirit exists after death in a state of consciousness; but that, on the contrary, they taught the state of death to be a complete decease of the conscious being, and that the life will not be rekindled until the period of resurrection. I must be allowed to affirm this until my interpretation of our Lord's discourses and those of his Apostles be shown to be erroneous. The passages of Scripture which I shall cite under this section, it is necessary to bear in mind, are *less explicit* than others which we have already considered. Many of them partake of the character of being either of doubtful significance, or of having only an apparent, and no real relation to the doctrines in question. Any exposition, therefore, which shall place these passages in direct antagonism with other and more definite portions of the sacred writings *cannot* be correct, since this would be to reverse an obvious canon of interpretation—that which requires doubtful and obscure portions to be explained by such as are of explicit and undoubted meaning. "The law of the Lord is *perfect*"—perfect in all its parts, needing neither additions nor abstractions. There is nothing of discord, but the most perfect harmony distinguishes its oracular breathings. Its voice is *one*; "to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to *this word*—[this *one* "testimony"—this *one* "word"]—it is because there is no light in them."

The following examples of the Scripture usage of the word *spirit*, will demonstrate the impropriety of regarding this term in the sense so commonly attached to it:—

"For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts: even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath, [Hebrew, *ruach*,] so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit [Hebrew,

* These terms, in popular discourse, are used interchangeably.

† Vide Hagenbach's Hist. of Doctrines, and the Church Histories.

‡ I would caution the reader against interpreting this remark in accordance with the very unscriptural and pernicious notion of man's absolute moral impotence. My observation has no reference to the origin of human depravity, but only to its existence. While the Scriptures characterize the dispositions of men as faulty and corrupt, they also blame and threaten them with punishment on that account. These evil dispositions, unhappily the moral features of the whole race, must therefore be voluntarily acquired and matured.

ruach,] of man that goeth upward, and the spirit [Hebrew, *ruach*,] of the beast that goeth downward, to the earth?" Eccl. 3: 19-21.

In this passage, the word *ruach*, which primarily signifies *breath*, and is derived from the verb to *breathe*, is translated with two English words, *breath* and *spirit*. Why should our translators, in this passage, depart from a uniform rendering? The only way I can account for this circumstance is, that they believed in the separate state and immortality of the soul, and therefore rendered this passage—not, I believe, clandestinely, but under the influence of habit, or honest conviction—in harmony with their own doctrinal opinions. Thus, too, they have rendered the following passage, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward, to the earth?" Here a distinction is marked between the destiny of the "spirit of man," and that of the "spirit of the beast"—the one is affirmed to go "*upward*," and the other "*downward*." But how does this agree with the former part of the same passage? "*As the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath*—[or spirit, *ruach*];—so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast. *All go unto one place*." Now, if "the spirit of man" goes *upward*, and "the spirit of the beast" goes *downward*," how can it be said that "*as the one dieth so dieth the other*?" How can it be affirmed that "*a man hath no preeminence above a beast*?" How, if one goes *upward*, and another *downward*, can "*all go unto one place*?" The passage is evidently incorrectly rendered in our English version. Instead of reading, "Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward, to the earth?" Luther gives the correct reading, as follows, "Who knoweth whether the spirit of man goeth upward," &c. This rendering is supported by the Septuagint and Vulgate, and instead of disagreeing with the former statements of the preacher—as does our English version—is in perfect consistency with them. Thus, the meaning of this interrogatory is, "Who knoweth of any difference in the destinies of man and the beast?" There is no difference in respect of their *destinies*, although there is in respect of their *natures*. Their *destiny* is identical—"All go unto one place"—"So that a man hath no preeminence above a beast."

"There is no man that hath power over the spirit [ruach, breath,] to retain the spirit," [ruach, breath.] Eccles. 8: 8.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit [ruach, breath,] shall return to God who gave it." Eccl. 12: 7.

Compare this passage with that in Gen. ch. 2: 7, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul"—or *person*. In this passage we see that God did not breathe into man his *personality*, for Adam was called *man* before he became an animated existence. God breathed into man, and so kindled the human mechanism with life; and when man dies, this gift of life—this breath—returns to God who gave it. If this text teaches that the spirit of man, as the distinct conscious personality of man, goes back again to God who gave it, in this form and with this quality, then we are fairly compelled to agree with Origen in his belief of the *pre-existence* of human souls.

"In whose hand is the soul [margin, life,] of every living thing, and the breath [ruach] of all mankind." Job. 12: 10.

"His breath [ruach] goeth forth, he returneth to his earth." Psalm 146: 4.

"And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath [ruach] in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, [ruach,] prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind [ruach], Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, [ruach,] O breath, [ruach,] and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath [ruach] came into them, and they lived." Ezek. 37: 8, 9, 10.

From these citations it will be seen that the words *breath* and *spirit* are interchangeable; and that in the original Hebrew, one word, *ruach*, stands for both. It is evident that there is no authority in these passages for the popular dogma, that the *spirit* of man is capable of a *distinct existence* in a disembodied state, and that the *spirit* is the human personality.

An examination of the following passages will show that the word *soul*, which so frequently occurs in the sacred writings, is not to be understood in the technical sense which modern theology claims for it.

"Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." [Hebrew, *living soul*.] Gen. 1: 20.

"God created great whales and every living creature." [Heb. *living soul*.] Gen. 1: 21.

"God said let the earth bring forth the living creature." [Heb. *living soul*.] Gen. 1: 24.

"Man became a living soul." Gen. 2: 7. (The same phrase in Hebrew as is translated above, *living creature*.)

"But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice * * * even that soul shall be cut off. * * Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean thing * * even that soul shall cut off from his people. * * For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast * * even the soul that eateth it shall be cut off from his people." Lev. 7: 20, 21, 25.

"All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall come at no dead body." [Heb. *dead soul*.] Num. 6: 6.

"And there were certain men who were defiled with the dead body of a man." [Heb. *dead soul* of a man.] Num. 9: 6.

"Whosoever hath killed any person." [Heb. *any soul*.] Num. 31: 19.

"None can keep alive his own soul." Psalm 22: 29.

"Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents." Jer. 2: 4.

"They sought their meat to relieve their souls." Lament. 1: 19.

"Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you." Ezek. 13: 18.

"To slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive, that should not live." Ezek. 13: 19.

"The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ezek. 18: 20.

"They have devoured souls." Ezek. 22: 26.

"Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves * * to destroy souls." Ezek. 22: 27.

"I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain." Rev. 6: 9.

"I saw the souls of them that were beheaded." Rev. 20: 4.

In the last two quotations, souls are said to cry with a loud voice—to be arrayed in white robes—to sit upon thrones and reign with Christ a thousand years. Surely such a various employment of the word *soul*, as the above extracts show, is sufficient proof that the Scriptures do not justify the popular

idea which is connected with this word. The sacred writers obviously employ this word to designate the individual being, man, in his compound totality, as a rational, sensual, and corporeal existence.

The following passage has been urged in proof of the separate state of the soul as a conscious and indestructible being. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matt. 10: 28.

The indestructibility, be it observed, is not affirmed of the *soul itself*, but only in relation to the *power of man*. Man is not able to destroy the soul; but God "is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." I cannot see even the shadow of an argument here, for the dogma that the disembodied soul is the conscious personality of the being man. Nothing more is implied than that the soul is *distinct* from the body; what is its distinction is the point, not to be assumed, but proved. Such a distinction as that which is commonly claimed for it is purely gratuitous. How can it be logically affirmed, from the above words, that the *soul* of man is the *personality* of man, capable of existing and acting distinct from the body? The question to be answered is, what is the meaning of the word *soul* as it occurs in this place? We may ascertain by comparing it with the parallel passage in Luke—"And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear Him which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell." Luke 12: 4-5. In this record of our Lord's words the peculiarity of expression in Matthew's Gospel, upon which so much stress is laid, is altogether absent, the word *soul* does not appear.

Another passage in the Gospel of Matthew will show the value of the word *soul* as employed in the verse under consideration—"Whosoever will save his *life* shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his *life* for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own *soul*, or what shall a man give in exchange for his *soul*?" Matt. 16: 25-26. Here the word translated *life* twice in the former verse, and *soul* twice in the latter verse, is in each case the same in the Greek. I would ask, why should the same word receive different translations in two intimately connected and current passages? Let the reader substitute the word *soul* in each of the four places of this extract, and he will perceive that in the 25th verse it would sadly grate upon orthodox ears. This was seen by the translators, and hence they employed the word *life* which is the proper term. But why not preserve the same rendering throughout? The translators were believers in the soul's separate existence and immortality, and hence the English Bible has received a coloring from their private belief. There is evidently no reason why one Greek word, occurring four times consecutively, should be translated by two different English words. I would request the reader to substitute the word *life* in the 26th verse for the word *soul*, as in the previous verse, and he will find a natural, and, as I believe, the strictly correct meaning of our Lord's words. The parallel passage in Luke's Gospel is as follows—"For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world, and lose himself or be cast away?" Luke 9: 25. It is very apparent, from the comparison of the identical passages in the two Evangelists, that the word *soul* in Matthew's Gospel, does not comprise the idea of the human personality independently of the corporeal part of the human nature. The comparison of

these passages will explain the meaning of the word *soul* in Matthew 10: 28, which we may thus paraphrase, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to destroy the *life*, because there will be a resurrection from the dead; but fear Him which is able to destroy both *life* and body in the fires of Gehenna, when after the resumption of both at the resurrection, the wicked shall experience a punishment which shall end in their complete destruction." They shall "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." 2 Thes. 1: 9.

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thes. 5: 23.

Macknight thus paraphrases this text, "And that ye may be enabled to obey this, and every precept of the Gospel, may God, the author of all happiness, sanctify you wholly; and may your whole person, your understanding, your affections, and your actions, be preserved by God, without any just cause of blame." This text, so far from proving that the *spirit* of man can exist apart from the other elements of his composite nature, as the human personality, enumerates these several elements as essential to the complete nature of man. Paul does not say, "I pray God your *spirit* or your soul may, at death, ascend up as your disembodied self to heaven;" but, "I pray God your *complete* self—your whole spirit and soul and body—be preserved free from all occasion of blame unto the second advent of Christ, when he shall come to raise the dead to life." Paul's prayer is, that the believers at Thessalonica may be found among the "blameless" who rise in the "first resurrection at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I would agree with those to whom Macknight refers, who considered that as the Apostle's design was to teach mankind religion and not philosophy, his prayer means no more but that they might be thoroughly sanctified, of how many constituent parts soever their nature consisted.

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." 1 Thes. 5: 9-10.

The last part of this verse has been made to support the popular theory of a state of consciousness for the separate soul. A superficial reader, or one who detached this text from the scope of the Apostle's discourse, might naturally enough, with his pre-conceptions, so interpret the passage. A careful consideration, however, of these words, in connection with the current reasoning of the Apostle, would conduct to a very different conclusion. In the previous chapter, Paul had been describing the circumstances of our Lord's second coming, for the comfort of certain bereaved Thessalonian believers, who seem to have imagined that those who should be "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," would have considerable advantages above those who were deceased. Paul assures them that these "shall not prevent them which are asleep;" that, on the contrary, "the dead in Christ shall rise first," and they who are "alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," and so "ever be with the Lord." In allusion to what he had there been saying, Paul assures these Thessalonians that neither will have the advantage over the other with respect to immediate vision of the Lord, and enjoyment of immortality—"Whether we wake or sleep," is of no moment;

Christ died for us that "we should live together with him" at his coming.

And thus Dr. Bloomfield (Greek Testament) expounds this text—"It is meant that whether we be alive or dead *that day*, it matters not; the living with Christ, or enjoying eternal happiness with him, shall be equally our portion."

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4: 12.

This verse is a description of the efficacy of the divine threatening against all unbelievers. So far from teaching that the "dividing asunder of the soul and spirit" is the liberation of the spirit to exist in a separate state of consciousness, this text affirms that such a separation is the total destruction of the human being, and its selection of language is for the purpose of marking more emphatically the completeness of the destruction. Professor Stuart in his commentary on this passage says—"In the phrase under consideration, piercing so as to divide or separate life and spirit, plainly means inflicting a wound so deep as shall prove deadly; for that which separates the soul from the system endowed with animal life, is of course deadly."

Macknight also has the following note—"The power of the word of God in piercing to the parting both soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, is understood by some, of the efficacy of the punishments threatened in the Gospel, utterly to dissolve the whole human frame."

"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Heb. 6: 12.

Some read this passage as if it affirmed that the departed saints, as disembodied spirits, were in the enjoyment of their heavenly rewards. But this cannot be its meaning, for such an exposition is plainly forbidden by a comparison with a subsequent place in this epistle. What this text asserts is, that there are those whose faith and patience have placed them in the company of them who inherit the promises—not the fulfilment of the promises—but the promises to be at a future time fulfilled. And hence this same epistle informs us, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises"—that is, the fulfilment of them. Heb. 11: 13. And again, "These all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 39-40.

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. 12: 22-23.

The words, "*the spirits of just men made perfect*," it is alleged, refer to disembodied spirits. The whole passage, it is evident, is highly oratorical; and on this account its expressions are to be treated with less critical severity than would be appropriate if the composition were more dispassionate. Whatever may be the meaning of this passage which is disputed, it is sufficiently clear that in it is no declaration that the "spirits of just men are their conscious personalities," and that they are existing at this moment in their perfected state. An attentive consideration of the passage will show that all the particulars referred to are future and not present. Believers "are come" to these privileges anticipatively now;

they will not "come" to them *actually* until hereafter. "The church of the firstborn" are at present only "written" or enrolled in heaven; their names are there now, their presence will be there when, from the gathered generations of the slumbering dead, "the children of the resurrection" shall be summoned to life. The phrase, "the spirits of just men made perfect," is obviously an example of the figure synecdoche, in which the entire nature of the human being is expressed by a term which signifies only a part. Thus we use the word *roof*, meaning the whole house; and speak of evil-disposed men as *wicked spirits*. It is important also to note that the subject of the participle translated "made perfect" is not the term *spirits*, but *just men*, and that the Greek would be more literally rendered thus—"Ye are come * * to the spirits of the perfected just ones."** In the preceding chapter, the concluding verse, we are informed that the long catalogue of Old Testament worthies will not be perfected until the entire Church of Christ is gathered in from the generations. "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The perfecting of the departed just ones, is at the period of resurrection, when "this mortal shall put on immortality."

"And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee let this child's soul come into him again! And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." 1 Kings 17: 21-22.

"And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway." Luke 8: 55.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus he gave up the ghost." (Greek, "he expired"—"breathed out." Luke 23: 46.†

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit! * * And when he had said this he fell asleep." Acts 7: 59-60.

In the above and similar passages, nothing more is taught than that the spirit is essential to the conscious existence of the being man, who is a compound creature depending for his existence upon his organization. Surely it will not be affirmed that the above convey the information that the spirit of man exists in a separate state as his conscious personality! The mind, by force of habit, invests these and kindred texts with the meaning which they popularly receive. Read by a person whose mind is not pre-occupied by the common opinion, these passages could not possibly inculcate such a notion. That must be an astute mind, indeed, which can discover such a mass of extraordinary meaning beneath these simple and popular modes of expression!

The spirit of the widow's son and of Jairus' daughter, came again not as some ethereal embodiment of consciousness and intelligence—their proper disembodied selves—to re-occupy, as a dwelling place, the bodily frames which they had vacated, but as the "spirit of life" to rekindle their expired consciousness. Thus we read of the re-animation of the two witnesses, "And after three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet." Rev. 11: 11. Our Lord having committed his spirit (equivalent, I presume, to his human life) to his Father, expired. In like manner Stephen, having resigned the breath of his life to Christ, "fell asleep." That we are not to understand these dying words of our Lord and Stephen to imply that their spirits ascended to God as their

* Pneumati dikation teleiomenon.

† Exspirensen.

living disembodied personalities, is clear; for, besides such a doctrine being nowhere taught in the Scriptures, we are informed that the *personalities* of our Lord and Stephen *died*. It is written of our Lord that *he—not his body—expired*. According to the popular anthropology, the *body*, independently of soul or spirit, or both, has *no life*; and, therefore, it would be ridiculous to say that the *dead body died*. So also of Stephen, *he—the personality Stephen—fell asleep*. The prayer, “receive my spirit,” suggests the idea of the resignation of something over which the dying man has no control—of which he is about to be deprived. Thus said Paul, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.” 2 Tim. 1: 12. Here is the language of evident solicitude about something with which he, Paul, at a future day, would be compelled to part. Now, if the giving up of the spirit is *not* the giving up of *life*, but the conscious self taking his departure into another state—in Paul’s case, as in that of every good man, according to the popular belief—a state of beatific vision and enjoyment—why all these anxious utterances?—*this giving up to another’s care*, of what can no longer be cared for by the individual himself! Why does Paul speak of this something of his being kept by Christ “against that day?” evidently implying that between the interval of death and the period marked by the terms “that day,” this something was *not in his own possession*. If it signifies, as I believe it does, the giving up the *life* to Jesus that it may be kept by him, and in the prayer and faith that he will restore it again when he shall appear “that day”—the day of his second advent—then all obscurity vanishes from such passages, and they are found to be in harmonious keeping with Paul’s declaration, “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Col. 3: 3-4.

“And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.” Matt. 14: 26.

“But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. * * Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” Luke 24: 37-39.

The reference in these passages is *not to the human spirit*, but merely to spiritual existence. Had it been said, “they supposed that they had seen *his spirit*,” and also, “behold it is I myself, for *my spirit* hath not flesh and bones,” then there would be some more plausible defence of the theory of disembodied human existence. In these passages, however, it is not the possessive pronoun, but the indefinite article that is used—“A spirit;” and, therefore, all that these texts imply is, the existence of *other beings* who are called *spirits*.

“I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth,) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth,) how that he was caught up into paradise.” 2 Cor. 12: 2-4.

This passage is confessedly one of the most remarkable in Paul’s writings. Its obscurity is apparent since Paul himself, with a double emphasis, confesses that he was altogether ignorant of what had occurred to him. And, therefore, if the subject of this extraordinary vision or translation, or whatever else it may have been, declares that he “cannot

tell” anything at all about it, beyond the fact that he was a spectator and auditor of heavenly things; and that this preternatural event, in the method and circumstances of its accomplishment only “God knoweth,” it surely must be as vain as presumptuous for me to stop to inquire about, or to offer any opinion upon it. On the expressions, “in the body or out of the body,” it will suffice to remark, that Paul *could not* mean that his soul was his conscious personality, capable of a separate existence apart from his body, and that in this disembodied state he might have been “caught up to the third heaven”—I am justified in affirming that he could not mean because it would be in manifest contradiction to what he had taught this same Church in the 15th chapter of his first epistle. Since these passages have already come under consideration in a former section, (Section VI.,) I refer the reader to what is there said in support of this affirmation.

The phrases, “in the body” and “out of the body,” “being clothed” and “unclothed,” “in this tabernacle,” “our earthly house,” our “building of God,” and others of this class, are obviously familiar *Hebrew images*, equivalent in their meaning to the two states, *mortal and immortal*, of which man is capable. To wrest these images in support of the popular theory of separate souls, is to do manifest violence to the sacred Scriptures which abound in statements that prove the impossibility of such a condition of the human nature. Therefore, when Paul says, “Whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell,” I understand him to say that he did not know whether he was for the time being in a *natural or glorified state*. “There is a *natural body*, and there is a *spiritual body*,” says Paul: he nowhere speaks of man existing without a body at all.

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit. By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” 1 Peter 3: 18-20.

This text is one of acknowledged difficulty by all expositors. What its precise meaning is, I do not pretend to say; and I shall only make a few remarks rather by way of pointing out some of its difficulties, than to furnish any dogmatic interpretation of it. Let it be observed, then, that the time when Christ preached was *not before* his incarnation, nor was it between his death and resurrection, but *after* his resurrection. The words read, “being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, by which—[rather, ‘in which’]—also he went and preached;” that is, in which “new” or resurrection life, “he went and preached.” Now, the question presents itself, who were these “*spirits in prison*” to whom Christ after his resurrection “went and preached?” To the answer that they were the disembodied *spirits of men* who were disobedient in the days of Noah, grave objections immediately suggest themselves. Here would be a grand authority for the Popish dogmas of purgatory, and prayers for the dead, if we allow that our text teaches that Christ preached to the spirits of dead *men*—that is, offered salvation to them; for such is the uniform meaning of *preaching* in the Scriptures. Besides, such an exposition contradicts the protestant belief that death *closes* the probation and religious opportunities of mankind; and still further, the testimony of the word of God whereby we are assured that “it is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this the judgment*.” For

my own part, I have not the least doubt that the phrase, "*spirits in prison*," refers not to *men*, but to certain *spiritual beings* who were disobedient in the days of Noah in some such way as to bring them within the reach of the Christian redemption. Perhaps that event (Gen. 6) of "the sons of God" who were enamored with "the daughters of men," whose progeny were *unnatural*, called in the record *giants*, may have some connexion with this text.

Peter, in his second epistle, says, "If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, [not Gehenna, the place of future punishment, but Tartarus,*] and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment." 2 Peter 2: 4. This seems to refer to some other angelic defection than that of Satan and his angels; for these latter with their chief, who is "the prince of the power of the air," roam at large through heaven and earth. Satan "goes about as a roaring lion." These evil spirits are evidently not bound down in "chains of darkness."

Again, the Apostle Jude speaks of "angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner to these† [angels,] giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange [margin, other] flesh, are set forth for an example." Here the Apostle Jude states that certain "angels" left their own habitation, and went after *strange or other flesh*, committing fornication, and that these angels are in chains of darkness. May not this explain who "the sons of God" were, who, "in the days of Noah—the precise time that Peter states—(1 Peter 3: 20)—saw the daughters of men," [the "strange" or other flesh,] that they were fair? And their sin being in connection with the human race, they may be in some way advantaged by Christ's preaching to them after the completion of the work of redemption. Here, to say the least, are very remarkable coincidences; and I venture to think that this comparison of passages suggests the true interpretation of the text in question. Whether this suggested exposition be right or wrong, the phrase, "*spirits in prison*," cannot be proved to be *human* spirits; and, therefore, can never be pressed into the popular service in justification of the belief in disembodied human existence.

"Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." 1 Peter 4: 5-6.

*Greek, *tartarosas*. It is commonly assumed, but without sufficient authority, that Tartarus is equivalent to the term Gehenna, and signifies the place of punishment for the wicked. If Peter meant to convey the idea that these "*spirits in prison*" were in Gehenna, why did he not use that word which is uniformly employed to denote the place of punishment? Or if he meant that they were in the same state as *deceased men*, why did he not use the regular term *hades*? The term *hades*, it appears, would have been unsuitable, because it denotes the state of the *unconscious dead*; while these were beings in a state of consciousness, capable of listening to, and being influenced by, the preaching of Christ. Why does he depart from the strict usage of the Scripture writers, and substitute another word, *Tartarus*, in this place? Evidently we are not to understand, in this place, the Gehenna of the lost, for there is *salvation thence*; and Peter himself assures us that the fires of Gehenna are *not yet kindled*. 2 Peter 3: 7.

†Jude 6, 7. It will be observed that I have introduced the words "to these" in the text, and have explained in a parenthesis their probable reference. The Greek is written thus, *ton emoiou toutois tropon*. The word *toutois* (to these) is left untranslated in our English version; and which, being in the masculine gender, agrees with the *aggelous* (angels) of verse 6.

This text is sometimes adduced in support of the doctrine of disembodied spirits; but I humbly conceive that it has nothing whatever to do with the question. It does *not* state, as some suppose, that the men were dead when the gospel was preached to them, but that it was preached to them *before* they died. The sense of the passage may be thus explained—"For this cause was the gospel preached to them who are *now* dead." Dr. Whitby has the following note—"The gospel hath been preached to them, not that it shall be preached to them *when* dead." And Dr. Hammond, in his paraphrase, thus writes, "For thus hath he formerly proceeded with the sinners of the old world, and all others that are now long ago dead, first preached to them *when they were alive* as now unto us." Many expositors consider that the latter part of this text alleges two conditions of man's conscious being; one in this world, and the other in the state intermediate between death and resurrection. Dr. Boothroyd, for example, says, "They were condemned to die, as to men to be no more conversant with them; but when the animal life is destroyed, and its union with the spirit dissolved, each lives as to God, is conversant with them in the spirit. * * In this view, the text is a proof of the existence of the spirit in a separate state." But this exposition plainly contradicts the uniform teaching of Christ and his Apostles in reference to the state of the dead. We have already ascertained, from the consideration of several most definite passages in the discourses of our Lord and his Apostles, that man has no consciousness—no life between death and resurrection. And we shall, moreover, be the less disposed to attach much weight to any authoritative interpretation of this and similar difficult passages, when we remember what Dr. Adam Clarke says, that "there are as many different translations of this verse and comments upon it, as there are translators and commentators." Notwithstanding the acknowledged difficulties of the latter part of this text, I do not conceive that it is incapable of an interpretation in strict accordancy with what we have ascertained to be the teaching of Scripture on the doctrine of the state of man in death. I would paraphrase the verse thus, "The gospel was preached in the life-time of them who are now dead; and to them for this cause, namely, that although they must be judged in the flesh after the manner of men—that is, that although they must experience the common lot of man, which is to die—yet that they might live according to God in the spirit—that is, that they might, notwithstanding, be made alive again in a spiritual existence—namely, resurrection—when Christ shall be ready to judge the quick and the dead." Whether this be the Apostle's meaning, I cannot positively affirm; it is, at all events, a sense of which the passage is capable, and which agrees with the subject of the Apostle's discourse.

That system, however, can have but small support, and must be of very doubtful merit, which clings so tenaciously to ambiguous texts like the present, in defence of opinions which so obviously clash with the plainer statements of the inspired word.

Finally, the sense of our Lord's *transfiguration* has been supposed to authorise the popular belief in the soul's separate existence, as the human *personality*, in the state between death and resurrection.

The appearance of Elijah in this memorable scene can cause no surprise, since we are informed that his, like Enoch's, was an exception to the common lot of men. And the presence of Moses is *no proof*

that he still exists, or that he ever existed, as a *disembodied spirit*, for in that scene he appeared in a *glorified body*. The death of Moses, although it is expressly said that he died in the land of Moab, is not unconnected with the mysterious. We read that God "buried him," and that his resting place was never known, (Deut. 34;) and therefore, if it could be shown from the Scriptures that he still lives, it would contribute nothing to the popular faith. I would, however, simply remark on this event that there is no inconsistency in supposing that Moses should be raised from death, in his spiritual body, in order that he might be present on this august occasion.

The transfiguration was a typical representation of Christ's second advent, and of its coterminous events. "Verily, I say unto you," said our Lord to his disciples, "there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him." Matt. 16: 28, and 17: 1-3. This vision, then, exhibits to us "the Son of man coming in his kingdom;" here is the key to its interpretation. We are not to look here for the general characteristics of Christ in his kingdom, which he will establish on the earth, according to prophetic assurances, but for the characteristics of Christ "coming in his kingdom." When this event shall take place, the "dead in Christ" shall be raised, and the *living saints* shall be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." In the transfiguration, we behold the types of these events in the persons of Moses and Elias. Moses is the type of the raised *dead*, and Elias of the changed *living* saints. We have, in this wonderful vision, a typical exhibition of "the first resurrection," which is coterminous with our Lord's coming in his kingdom. This was evidently the design of the vision. And it is in keeping with this design that the conversation between the glorified Jesus and Moses and Elias, was "his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."

Besides this principal instruction, there is another of very considerable importance—more especially to a Jew—which this vision incidentally furnishes. Peter, not apprehending the nature of this scenic instruction, and imagining that the kingdom of Christ was then and there about to be established, would localize and *equally* honor our Lord and Moses and Elias, by constructing for them "three tabernacles." His mistake was very significantly corrected by the immediate voice of Jehovah, distinguishing Christ as the pre-eminent personage, and challenging for him an especial and peculiar reverence, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. *Hear him.*"

There is no reason why Moses should not put off his glorified form and return again to the quiescence of the grave, until the resurrection of the saints, since Christ only assumed temporarily his glorified form, and divested himself of it when he left the mount. The case of Moses is materially different from that of the prophet Elijah. The former, unlike the latter, died and was buried; and it seems necessary on this account to suppose that Moses returned again after this event to the state of death. The contrary supposition that he lives in a glorified state is difficult, I think, to be reconciled with the impor-

tant fact that Christ is the "first fruits," and "first begotten" from the dead. There is an obvious propriety, as well as necessity, that the Ransomer of the dead should be the *first to rise*. It is specially to be noted, that although at the moment of Christ's expiring on the cross we are informed that the rocks were rent, and exposed the resting places of certain dead saints, it was not until "after his resurrection" that "the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves." Matt. 27: 51-53. If it be said that Moses might enter upon his resurrection life in virtue of Christ's resurrection, and that the priority would be merely in point of time, while the energy and justification would still be derived from the resurrection of our Lord, it is enough to reply that the Scriptures attach great importance to the circumstance of *time*. For example, "Every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." 1 Cor. 15: 23. Whether we can or cannot explain all the circumstances of this grand historic event, there is obviously no authority here for the doctrine of the separate existence and personality of the human spirit. Like every other text that has been cited, it either disproves the popular doctrine, or has nothing to do with the question. The testimony of the Word of God is both abundant and satisfactory; its voice is intelligible and decided in condemnation of the prevalent theory.

If this question were of small account in connection with practical religion, it would scarcely deserve the prominence which we seek to give it; although truth, whatever may be its relative magnitude, is ever to be desired rather than error. But the question is a *vital* one—vital to the theoretic integrity of God's word—vital to the proper adjustment of its several doctrines; and vital to the development of a scripturally religious character. And, therefore, the charge of our Lord is painfully applicable to every advocate and promulgator of the popular theory—"Ye make void the law of God through your traditions."

SECTION VIII.—PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE DEAD.

It is possible that the philosophic reader, who may have honored me with his attention thus far, may experience some surprise at my obvious disregard of every objection which the human reason might urge against my conclusions. In explanation, it appears to me that independent reasoning is a grand impertinence here, since the state of man in death is a subject of revelation; whose teachings, therefore, must be accepted as authoritative and final. This question comes within the scope of Scripture exegesis, and not of philosophical argumentation; we have for our information on this solemnly interesting inquiry, a "Thus saith the Lord," and therefore our appeal should be exclusively to the Scriptures. I would respectfully suggest to my brethren in Christ the importance of drawing broadly and obviously the line of demarcation between the verities of the inspired Word, and the speculative results of human inquiry, which in psychological studies can never, I apprehend, claim a higher authority than that of the possible or the probable. Much safer would it be for us to deny even the possibility of psychology, as a science, and renounce it for ever as profitless and vain, than suffer its guesses to become authority in matters of religion. This, I seriously think, has been done. The mind of man, too conceited and confident of its own achievements, is naturally exposed to the danger of seeking to be wise above what

is written, and of transferring the results of its unlawful, or at best imperfect labors, side by side with the sacred certainties of the teachings of God. The great mass of traditions, both Jewish and Christian, are the historical proofs of this lamentable tendency. It is a significant circumstance, that even the sacred canon of Scripture could not close without a most impressive warning to our meddling race against tampering with the written revelation. Rev. 22: 18-19.

If we may judge by the impatience which is exhibited in our day of any attempt to elicit a meaning from the Word of God, other than what is acknowledged by the general body of professing Christians, it would appear that the Church denies the possibility of its being wrong in any article of fundamental importance.

The late Professor Vinet thus appositely remarks, "All those truths which are now admitted to be incontrovertible, with reference to society, were for a length of time regarded as problematical. The true problem, however, is to discover how such truths could ever have been questioned. In every branch of science or of the arts, the human mind progresses more rapidly. It is slow only when searching for the right. It deduces with difficulty, and after much tedious investigation, the direct consequences of principles it has previously admitted. Even now, after eighteen centuries of Christianity, we are very probably involved in some enormous error, of which Christianity will, at some future time, make us ashamed, as it has already done with regard to torture, to slavery, and to compulsion in matters of religion. We believe that this will continue to be the case until Christianity shall have fully developed all its excellences. *We extract but by little and little those treasures which are abundantly contained within its bosom.*"*

It surely will not be alleged that the progress of intellect is necessarily a voucher for the progress of piety; nor should it be pleaded that the lateness of the period in the Christian dispensation in which we live, renders it impossible that the Church should, in some grand points, be still wrong. To suppose the impossibility of being religiously wrong because we live in the nineteenth century of the Christian era—the last time of the last times—if we interpret rightly "the signs" of our "times"—is to forget the inspired portraiture of our advanced and advancing period. "In the last days," says Paul, "perilous times shall come, * * having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3: 1-5. "In the last days," the Church, so far from being proof against lapses into error by the giant strides of a rapidly developing intellect is, for example, to become infidel on a grand topic of religious interest and hope, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet. 3: 4,) is to be its unbelieving inquiry. The Church is not to lose its outward characteristics and distinction by descending into the depths of shameless vice: it is to preserve its visibility by being habited in the decent exterior of religious profession. Its bad state will not be marked by that kind of daring and blasphemous infidelity which would annihilate its distinctiveness as the professing Church, but by the infidelity of a more decent, albeit not of a more reputable, nature. The "last days" are to be distinguished by a very general profession of religion; and in this general religious profession, since it will not be the vitality, but the form and affectation of piety,

will lie the "perilous" character of the times. The sin of these days shall be, that men have "the form of godliness," all the while they are practically "denying the power thereof."

I have already referred to some remarkable examples of discrepancy between the development of the religious lives of the early believers, and the topics of apostolic preaching, and the religious life and preaching in our own day. True believers are spoken of in the Scriptures as those who "seek for glory, and honor, and immortality," and whose reward is "eternal life," (Rom. 2: 7:) professing believers in the present day "seek" not "immortality" as mortal and perishable beings; they spiritualize, and hence destroy the meaning of this text. Paul taught that "the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord," (Romans 6: 23;) professing believers of the present day, claim to possess "eternal life" as "never dying souls," and hence reject endless life as the gift of God through Christ. The Scriptures of both testaments abound with promises of Christ's second coming; and the exhortations to "wait" and "watch" for that event are earnestly and frequently repeated. The Apostles and believers in primitive times derived some of their most exquisite satisfactions from contemplating that event. Let the reader peruse carefully the two epistles to the Thessalonians in exemplification of this statement. Our Lord concluded his gracious vision to John in Patmos, by saying that the faithful preacher of his gospel will give considerable prominence to the speediness of his coming, "He which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly;" to which that Apostle responded his earnest "Amen," and added, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Rev. 22: 20. The religious life of the Thessalonian believers, Paul thus describes, "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." 1 Thess. 1: 9-10. Our Lord taught his disciples to pray for his second advent, and the establishment of his millennial reign on the earth, in that model prayer which bears his name—"Thy kingdom come * * for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever." Do expectation and earnest prayer for Christ's second coming, characterize the piety of modern Christians? Is not the doctrine of a reigning Messiah on this earth notoriously unpopular now? Where is the Church's united "Amen" to the declaration, "Lo, I come quickly?" What Church among us can be fairly characterized as was that at Thessalonica? Is not that a nearer representation of the Christianity of the nineteenth century of which Peter prophesied when he said, "There shall come in the last days scoffers saying, where is the promise of his coming?" The Bible reflects another image than that of modern Christianity.

I have alluded also, at some length, to the fact that the resurrection from the dead formed the chief topic of our Lord's and his Apostle's ministry. Our Lord thus distinguished himself, "I am the Resurrection and the Life;" and thus explained the nature and chief benefit of his redemption, "I will raise him up at the last day." John 6: 39-40, 44, 54. Paul thus reasoned to the Church of his time, "If one died for all, then were all dead." 2 Cor. 5: 14. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3: 3-4. On the resurrection of the dead, Paul founded the entire value of the Gospel. All was vain and profitless "if the dead rise not." It was to him and to all, a matter

* "Essay on the Profession of Personal Religious Conviction," pp. 37-8.

of indifference how they lived; they might relax the ties of all moral obligation with impunity, "if the dead rise not." Deceased believers in Christ were all "perished;" there was no future life, "if the dead rise not." Hence, at each of his several audiences in Jerusalem, before the Sanhedrim, before Felix, Festus and Agrippa, and at Athens, he held forth the hope of the promise made unto the fathers—*resurrection from the dead*. Every glimpse that we get of the Apostle's ministry, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, reveals to us that resurrection from the dead, through the resurrection of Christ, was their common and prominent theme. Towards this, as their speech indicates, all their thoughts converged. Thither they travelled in their plain historic discourses; and when they reached this sublime topic, there they stood as by the grand central fact of their religious system, pleading with and persuading their hearers to be reconciled to God, and accept of this salvation. The examples are furnished on the day of Pentecost—on the occasion of healing the lame man—on Peter and John's first arraignment before the council—on the arraignment of all the Apostles. It thus incidentally peers out when we are told of the indignation of the Jews, because they "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead;" and that "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Contrast the prominence given to the doctrine of resurrection by the Apostles, with the absolute abeyance in which it is held by preachers of the present day. It is impossible to avoid surprise at these manifest discrepancies, to instance no others. The earnest mind, anxious to possess truth and to serve God in the manner which He requires, will not be satisfied with merely marking these extraordinary differences, he will ask reasons, and push his inquiries to a satisfactory conclusion. The Puritan of the nineteenth century will demand a revision of the doctrinal basis of Christianity; he is satisfied that such obvious incongruities must owe existence to some radical error which has found a place among the credenda of the orthodox faith. This error we have shown elsewhere,* is the belief in the separate personality and immortality of the human soul. The rejection of this doctrine, it is evident, will alone restore harmony to the disjointed system of doctrinal and practical religion which, unhappily, is the condition of modern Christianity. Man, as mortal, becomes a seeker for immortality. Destitute of eternal life, "the gift of God," which "is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," is appropriate to his great necessity. Incapable of existing in a separate state, as a disembodied conscious soul, the anxiety of the Apostle accords with his own solicitude, "If I may but attain to the resurrection of the dead!"—and his experience is identical with that of the first Christian disciples, "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Resurrection from the dead—the grand topic of the Apostolic ministry—this doctrine to a being who must die, and yield himself up to death's dominion, is "good tidings of great joy." Resurrection dependent on the second coming of Christ, the attitude of the believer will be that of the faithful servant who awaits in expectation his Lord's return; and his prayer will be, habitually and fervently, "Come, Lord Jesus," "come quickly!" In this view, obviously all is harmonious between the provisions of the Gospel and the condition of our fallen race. But

the Church teaches that immortality is the natural constitution of the human soul; and affirms that this fractional part of man's being is his personality, capable of existing in a state of disembodiment, and surviving in life its separation from the body. This is the great and mischievous tradition of Christian scribes which makes "void the law of God." So long as this dogma shall retain its place in the Christian creed, the Church will be the theatre of doctrinal strifes and divisions; the Christian character will remain imperfectly and unsatisfactorily developed; Christian professors, off their guard, will be neither waiting nor watching for their Lord; and Christ, if he come during such a state of things, shall scarce "find faith in the earth." The voice of Christ proclaims, "I am come that ye might have life!" The Church virtually responds to that call, "Thy coming to bestow life is needless, we are immortal souls and cannot die!" Thus the Church, like our first mother, has listened with impious credulity to the father of lies—"Ye shall not surely die;" and turns away from Christ's touching complaint, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life."

Allusion has been made to the comparative neglect of the doctrine of resurrection from the dead, in the practical Christianity of our day. It is evident that what is thus practically denied must, on the popular theory, be denied altogether. Believing, as the generality of Christians do, that the soul of man never dies, and that the soul is a man's proper self, then how is it possible that there can be any resurrection of the dead? Paul, by a very plain analogy, assures us that our resurrection body will not be the body which we possess now. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him. * * * So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. * * * It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." It is popularly taught that the resurrection only applies to the *bodies* of believers. But Paul declares that the resurrection body will be *another* body—a "spiritual body." "Thou sowest not that body which shall be." If, therefore, the *corruptible body is never raised again*, and the *soul never dies, nothing rises from the dead*. The popular theory necessarily makes the resurrection an impossibility.*

To the view here presented of the utter extinction of man in death, it is common to object on independent and philosophical grounds. We are told that "extinct spirit is a contradiction in terms;" that identity cannot be preserved between the being that died, and that which is raised, if in death the conscious personality ceases to exist. But can these arguments have any solid foundation? Are they not framed upon the necessary ignorance of the human mind in relation to such matters? What do we know of the term "spirit" to justify the gratuitous affir-

* If it be asked, with what body shall the wicked arise? I can only reply, the Bible does not furnish an answer to this question. The wicked will be raised identically the same beings, to be judged, punished, and destroyed. Paul answers the question, "with what body do they come?" in reference to those who are to live for ever; he says nothing concerning the resurrection body of the wicked. This information would only gratify an impertinent curiosity, and not contribute to a profitable enlightenment, or stimulate the obedience of faith. It is enough to know that the unjust, as well as the just, shall arise, since the whole race has been redeemed by Christ from the grave. He tasted death for every man. The question, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do?" the wicked "come?" intrudes into the secret things which belong to God.

religion, too, demands a fee to be merciful. The worship of the Virgin, the invocation of saints, purgatory, masses, and prayers for the dead, indulgences—all stand upon the dogma of the soul's immortality and separate state. And as these are among the mightiest engines of Papal domination and tyranny, Rome herself owes the power she wields to the faith of this dogma. Let it be denied by her own communion—let it be seen and avowed that there is no future life for the human being *until* the resurrection from the dead, and Rome Papal, like her Pagan prototype, would cease to scourge the earth with her "rod of iron"—this huge pile of apostasy would fall with a thunder crash that should echo through the nations, and then would be heard the prophetic cry of astonishment and derision, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!" Rome, however, reforms not herself, she is ripening for another kind of ruin—this catastrophe awaits other means.

I would respectfully remind my brethren in the ministry, of the responsibility of their position as the teachers of the Church, and suggest to them the propriety of reviewing the basis of their doctrinal instruction, that they be not obnoxious to the charge of "teaching, for doctrines, the commandments to men." And let not the reformed Churches rashly conclude that they cannot be wrong in the supposed scriptural integrity of their long cherished faith. This were to exhibit a lamentable ignorance of their own history, and the general history of Christianity, and were to arrogate to the masses of their own communion the infallibility which they justly deny to the Roman Pontiff. Infallibility is not in human creeds, nor conventional orthodoxy; it is the attribute of God and His revealed Truth, and therefore our sole appeal in this, as in all doctrines of religious controversy, is "to the law and to the testimony;" for "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

It can be scarcely necessary to say to my reader, who has accompanied me through these pages, that my aim has been not to encourage a vain curiosity, by searching into things which are hid from mortal eyes, but to demonstrate the necessity of retracing our unconscious footsteps, which have presumptuously, and in the name of religion, too, advanced into forbidden ground. With all humility, but with very strong convictions, I feel bound to assert that the professing Church, in relation to the topics here discussed, is occupying unscriptural and untenable ground, and I would earnestly call upon every lover of the truth as it is in Jesus, to "despise not prophesyings, but prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." It is beyond all reasonable contradiction that the Bible nowhere teaches that deceased believers enter upon their reward, nor that deceased unbelievers experience their recompense, either in part or wholly as disembodied spirits; but that with respect to the righteous, as they are gathered out of every passing generation, and by their faith and holy life prove themselves the "chosen generation" and "peculiar people" of the Great Ransomer, so are they gathered in death to them who are heirs of the promises, and whose peaceful slumbers shall not be disturbed until the last generation of the just—the last sheaf of the living harvest, shall be gathered in. It is a part of the grand scheme of human redemption that none shall anticipate before others their heavenly inheritance. Of the primitive faithful, it is written, "These all, having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without

us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 39-40. "The whole creation," like a laboring mother, "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," eager for the birth—"the manifestation of the sons of God." Then "shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day"—then "shall a nation be born at once!" Believers possessed of the scriptural intelligence and immortal hope of Paul, say with him, "And not only so," but "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." "O how vast the immortal awakening! Who can lift his mind to the greatness of the occasion! Where is the height from which we can command a view of the sublime spectacle? In prospect of it, Jesus said, 'the hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' As the first fruits of them that sleep, he has arisen and appeared before God, the certain pledge of the great harvest-home. 'Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision.' The wide earth shall 'stand thick,' and wave with the ocean plenitude of life. * * And to consummate the triumph, life on that day will be crowned with immortality; it will not merely be restored, but ennobled, exalted to the highest state of security and glory it can sustain. From the ruinous heap of every grave a living structure shall arise, built up into an imperishable monument of 'the Resurrection and the Life;' in the stead of corruption, it shall be inaccessible to decay; 'for neither can they die any more; they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.' * * Earth has been often that scene of splendid triumphs, the fame of which has filled the world, and reverberated from age to age; but how tame, how trifling the greatest achievements of man compared with this! a triumph which not only effaces the remembrance of all that man has done, but even eclipses the glory of the divine exploits; 'the former things shall no more come into remembrance.' Here man may indulge in wonder without loss of dignity; not to be astonished here would be unnatural! Christ himself is represented, ages before his incarnation, as contemplating this scene with boundless delight—as rehearsing his victory over death from eternity. From the bosom of the Father he looked on through the vista of time, while the successive parts of his great work passed in slow and stately procession, till he beheld the scene of the rising dead; all the intermediate ages instantly vanished; he saw, in anticipation, the king of terrors disarmed beneath his feet, the world flooded with light and life, the song of myriads of myriads reached his ear, shouting his name as their Great Deliverer; and, with holy impatience to realize the scene, he exclaimed, 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues! O grave, I will be thy destruction!' And during the interval, till he came in the flesh, did his interest in the prospect appear to have evaporated? What truth did he more frequently or solemnly teach? Thrice in rapid succession, he exclaimed, 'I will raise him up at the last day,' as if he sought to find, in the bare repetition of the truth, a solace and compensation for deferring the event. Nor, since his ascension, does his desire to realize it appear to have suffered the least abatement. On the contrary, 'from henceforth he is expecting' till this last enemy shall be destroyed. When last he appeared before his Church to close the visions of

futurity, the character which he selected for the occasion was, 'he that hath the keys of the invisible world, and of death.' This is the capacity in which he will next greet the eyes of the redeemed; meanwhile, he is training them to raise, in concert with himself, this shout over the last of their foes, 'O Death! where thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?' 27-28

"The Great Teacher," pp. 233-6.

FROM APPENDIX TO MR. HAM'S LECTURES ON LIFE AND DEATH.

THE VALUE OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY IN SCRIPTURAL SCIENCE.

The speculations of human philosophy I have designedly excluded from these lectures, considering them rather as impediments than aids to the acquisition of the truth on the subjects here discussed. "What is the chaff to the wheat?"

But since, however, it is even still the practice with many Christian theologians to justify their acceptance of the doctrine of the soul's immortality by appeals to the ancient philosophers; and since, moreover, the opinions of these ancient philosophers are cited as of unquestionable authority, it may enable the reader to form a correct judgment of their value, to bring under his notice the following competent and decisive testimonies.

The learned Dr. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, observes:

"As however even the faintest conjecture of a future existence, though it must not be confounded with a full assurance of it, is as far as it goes, an approximation towards the knowledge of truth, so also notions considerably incorrect respecting that existence, if they are but such as to involve the idea of enjoyment or suffering, corresponding with men's conduct in this life, have so far something of a just foundation, and of a tendency to practical utility. This, however, appears by no means to have been the case with the systems of any, as far as we can learn, of those ancient philosophers who contended the most strenuously for the immortality of the soul. For not only do they seem to have agreed, that no suffering could be expected by the wicked in another life, on the ground that the gods were incapable of anger, and therefore could not punish; but the very notion of the soul's immortality, as explained by them, involved the complete destruction of distinct personal existence. Their notion was, (I mean when they spoke their real sentiments; for in their exoteric or popular works they often inculcate for the benefit of the vulgar the doctrine of future retribution, which they elsewhere laugh at,) that the soul of each man is a portion of that Spirit which pervades the universe, to which it is reunited at death, and becomes again an undistinguishable part of the great whole; just as the body is resolved into the general mass of matter. So that their immortality, or rather eternity, of the soul was anterior, as well as posterior; as it was to have no end, so it had no beginning; and the boasted continuance of existence, which according to this system we are to expect after death, consists in returning to the state in which we were before birth; which every one must perceive is the same thing, virtually, with annihilation.

"Let it be remembered, then, when the arguments of the heathen sages are triumphantly brought forward in proof of the soul's immortality, that when they countenanced the doctrine of future retribution, they taught with a view to political expediency, what they did not themselves believe; and that when they spoke their real sentiments on the subject, the eternity of existence which they expected, as it implied the destruction of all distinct personality, amounted practically to nothing at all."—*Revelation of a Future State*, sect. v.

"If, after all, it be said that the heathens did come to the knowledge of God, a religious behaviour towards him, the immortality of the soul, &c., and that by the light of nature and unassisted reason only, without any help or instruction but their own ratiocinations, by observation, collection, and inference from sensible objects; a point that many are willing to believe, and to persuade others; I might as justly answer that they never did come to any tolerably adequate conceptions of the Supreme Being, much less of his will, or that worship which must be due to him; nor of the immortality of the soul, or a future state: that it is almost impossible to recount the many impious and false opinions they conceived of the Deity, &c.

"What their notions and doctrines were on theology, and how far their so much boasted philosophy conducted to the knowledge of these important truths, or to the final good and end of man," our author proposes to, and does fully examine, so that we may the better judge how far nature and reason are sufficient for these things; for if they did not direct the heathens,

neither can they others; and if the former knew not God, nor worshipped him as God, all the shining scraps and quotations cited from them, will be no more than empty, big, swelling words, without any truth or meaning.

"If, among all the writings of the heathen world, notwithstanding so many glittering sentences and almost divine discourses, there cannot be extracted any tolerably explicit system of God, his providence, attributes, and will, the immortality of the soul, or a future state; but in every important point there were horrid defects, and monstrous errors, no agreement or certainty amongst them, some affirming, some denying, others doubting; in all places shocking and impious principles, together with the vilest practices, allowed and tolerated, contrary both to nature and reason; the conclusion must be, that natural light was insufficient to divine knowledge."—*Ellis' Knowledge of Divine Things*, pp. 380, 381.

Among modern authors who have labored to prove the immortality of the soul by a process of rational argumentation, Mr. Samuel Drew must unquestionably be ranked as occupying a foremost position. His essay on the Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul, founded solely on physical and rational principles, is an elaborate metaphysical argument altogether independent of revelation. He emphatically deprecates any supposed disrespect to the word of God in assuming this ground which he was led to adopt in the belief that the human reason can furnish an independent argument confirmatory of what he supposes to be a doctrine of revelation—and which, therefore, might be of some service to those sceptical persons who resist the testimony of the sacred writings. As a composition, the essay of Mr. Drew displays remarkable intellectual acumen, and may serve as a monument of his literary fame; but as an argument, like all its predecessors in ancient and modern times, it is unsuccessful. Cicero's ecstatic rapture on the soul's permanence after death, thus coldly terminates: "If after all, I am mistaken in my belief of the soul's immortality, I am pleased with my error."—*De Senect.* And with respect to the arguments of Plato, he says:

"I have perused Plato with the greatest diligence and exactness, over and over again; but know not how it is, whilst I read him I am convinced, when I lay the book aside and begin to consider by myself of the soul's immortality, all the conviction instantly ceases."—*Tusc. Q. lib. I.* What Cicero said of Plato must also be said by the intelligent and most pains-taking reader of Drew. There is no well-defined data sufficient to form the basis of a superstructure of pure reason which shall demonstrate the soul's immortality. What do we know of the nature and essential properties of matter that we should affirm, that no mere material organization is adequate to the production of the conscious thinking principle? It is true that we are not acquainted with any combination of matter or means of combining matter which do, or shall secure such a result; but shall we conclude that because our experience and ability cannot furnish us with an illustration, therefore there is no illustration? It has yet to be proved that man is not such an illustration of consciousness resulting from material organization. Let it be granted, however, for argument's sake, that matter is incapable in any combination of evolving consciousness and thought, does it follow of necessity that the conscious or thinking principle is not matter—immaterial? If this is sound logic then the following argument stands good; it is affirmed of matter that it is indestructible because capable of divisibility—then what is not matter, or immaterial, is destructible, for the reason as in the former case that it is opposite. The argument is this: matter cannot think, therefore what is not matter can think. For the same reason since matter is indestructible, therefore what is not matter is destructible. But it is an important step in the proof of the soul's immortality in the argument from reason, that the soul is immaterial. It is immortal, say our metaphysicians, because it is immaterial; while on their own principle of reasoning, the immateriality of the soul is the proof of its destructibility or mortality! Cicero affirms, that a pure mind, thinking, intelligent, and free from body, was altogether inconceivable; and with a feeling bordering on despair, says:—"Which of all the philosophic opinions is true, let some god see to it; which even is most likely to be true, is a question hard to be determined."—*Tusc. Q. lib. I.*

The immortality of the soul is a human conceit reared upon the rotten foundation of mere conjectures and assumptions. A sound philosophical inquiry into the phenomenon of our being will ever end in the humble and pious admiration of the Psalmist, "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."